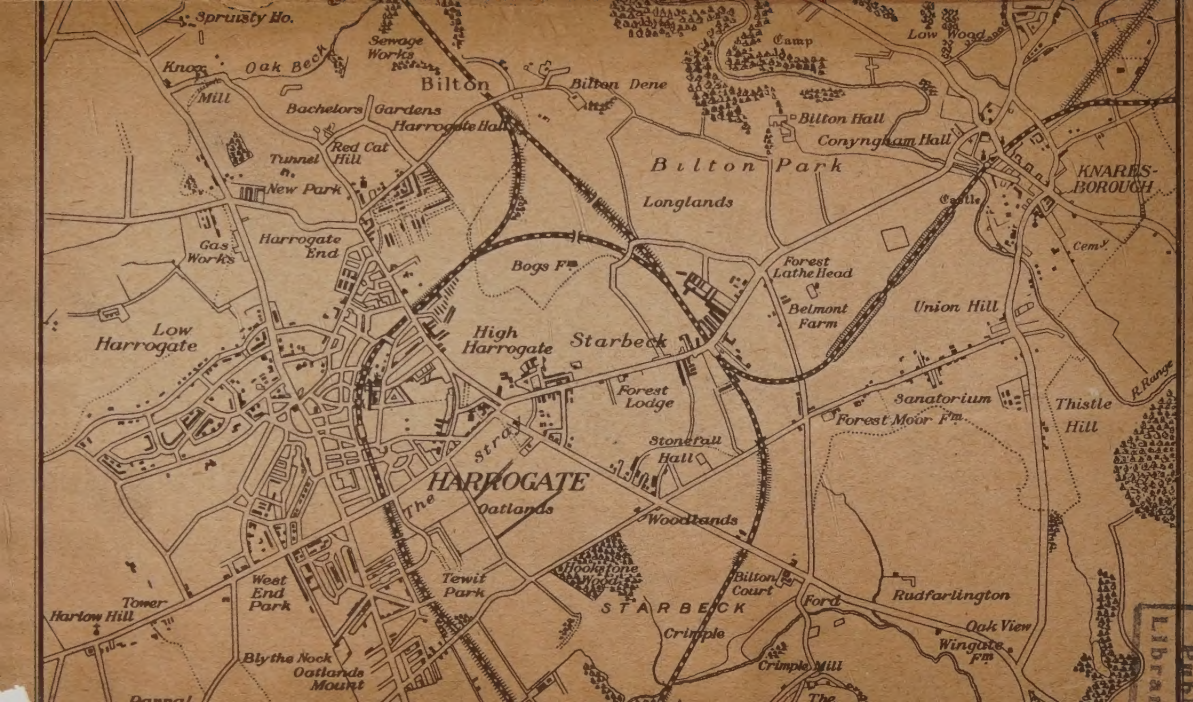
THE STORY OF THE ENGLISH TOWNS

HARROGATE & KNARESBOROUGH

J. S. Fletcher

STREET PLAN
OF
HARROGATE
Electric Light Station
Ladies College
St Wilfrid's Church
Harrogate Hydro
Valley Gardens
Swimming Bath & Turkish Baths
HARLOW MOOR
Harlow Manor Hydro
Agricultural Show Field
Harlow Old Watering
Waterworks
Waterworks
VICTORIA AVENUE
THE STRAY
Public


Sprusty Ho.
Knox Mill
Oak Beck
Sewage Works
Bilton
Bilton Dene
Camp
Low Wood
Bachelors Gardens
Harrogate Hall
Red Cat Hill
Tunnel
New Park
Bilton Hall
Conyngham Hall
Bilton Park
Longlands
KNARES-BOROUGH
Castle
Cem.y
Gas Works
Harrogate End
Bogs Fm
Forest Lathe Head
Belmont Farm
Union Hill
Low Harrogate
High Harrogate
Starbeck
Forest Lodge
Sanatorium
Forest Moor Fm
Thistle Hill
R. Range
Stonefall Hall
The Stray
HARROGATE
Oatlands
Woodlands
West End Park
Tower
Harlow Hill
Tewit Park
Hookstone Wood
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THE STORY OF THE ENGLISH TOWNS

HARROGATE AND KNARESBOROUGH

BY

J. S. FLETCHER

MEMBER OF THE YORKSHIRE ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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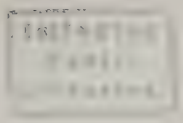
PREFACE

HARROGATE, as it presents itself to-day, is one of the newest of English towns; Knaresborough is one of the oldest. Knaresborough has been very much what it is now for several centuries; Harrogate, within the memory of man, has so increased as to dwarf its ancient neighbour. But while one represents antiquity, and the other the modern spirits of improvement and progress, there is a close link between the two, and in writing local history it is impossible to separate them. In the following chapters an attempt is made to deal with episodes in which they have a common interest; for example, the discovery of the medicinal waters which attract so many thousands to Harrogate every year, was originally a matter affecting Knaresborough only, for Harrogate, as we know it, had then no existence. Again, the career of John Metcalf is almost as closely concerned with the new town as with the old. And

as no one goes to Harrogate without visiting Knaresborough, there seems to be good reason for dealing with one place in union with the other.

J. S. FLETCHER.

THE CROSSWAYS,
HAMBROOK, CHICHESTER.



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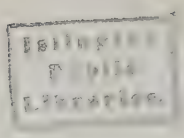

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HARROGATE AND KNARESBOROUGH

I. THE FOREST OF KNARESBOROUGH

ON the third day of September, in the year 1767, a gathering took place in the neighbourhood of Harrogate and Knaresborough which was of a much more fateful character than was probably thought of by those who had a part in it or witnessed its proceedings. On that day six men, Joseph Tullie, Receiver General of the Revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster, Robert Roper, Auditor for the North Parts of the Duchy, William Ashurst, Auditor for the South Parts, William Masterman, Clerk of the Council, William Marsden, Surveyor of the Lands, and Francis Russell, Surveyor of the Woods, met " at a certain place where the Water of Crimple runs into the River Nidd," and in the presence of the Deputy Constable, Deputy Steward, and Bailiff of His Majesty's Castle, Honour, and Forest of Knaresborough, made public proclamation that they were empowered by Royal Commission to perambulate and ascertain the Metes and Boundaries of the Forest, calling to their aid and assistance all officers and tenants and such " ancient persons " as were

conversant with the countryside and neighbourhood. This proclamation, which had been prefaced by fourteen days' public notice in all the surrounding towns and villages, duly made, they set out on their travels, in company with "a great Concourse of His Majesty's Copyhold Tenants of the said Honour and Forest," and continued them, from day to day, until the 27th of the same month, by which date, having personally walked over every yard of the boundaries, following streams, paths, woods, meadows, moors, they made their return, written out on Five Skins of Parchment, at the foot of each signing their names, and to the last affixing their seals. The perambulation, then, occupied the time of these six Commissioners during twenty-one working days, and its real significance lies in the fact that it was a preliminary to the enclosure, by an Act of Parliament of 1770, of a vast tract of twenty thousand acres, set down in the Act as open, commonable, or waste lands. The award in respect to this tract was made in 1775, and it is interesting to know how it was made and how it affected the folk of the district. 2751 acres were sold to defray the expenses. 2344 acres were awarded to the Crown. 4694 acres were apportioned to the tithe owners. The remaining portion was distributed amongst 700 different persons. Finally, 32 acres were given to trustees for the use of the poor, many of whom, we may be sure, had, until this enclosure was made, enjoyed common rights over land which was now lost to them and their like for ever.

Long before this proceeding of 1767 there had

been another Commission held in the Forest of Knaresborough to make enquiry into its Ancient Customs. In June, 1563, being "the fifth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lady Elizabeth," a commission was directed to the Earl of Cumberland, Sir William Ingilby, and other worthy gentlemen, "to enquire, by the Oaths of Twelve Honest and Indifferent Men, dwelling in the Forest of Knaresborough, of the Ancient Customs and Things which of old Time had been used within the same." The particulars of those customs are deeply interesting; they show what had been done in this wild and lonely part of England for many centuries of the Middle Ages; they also show what, in view of the ancient usages, the Elizabethan Commissioners ordained should continue "for a final Order, and for the Ease and Quietness of the Tenants." On the death of a Customary Tenant, the Officer is to seize "to the use of the Queen's Majesty, her Heirs and Successors," his Best Beast, whether it be Horse, Ox, or Cow, for his Heriot. No Customary Tenant must cut down "any great Trees of the Age of 24 years." The heirs of any tenant whose life has been forfeited by conviction for Felony must pay a fine of six years' rent of his lands within a year and a day after their ancestor's death. Widows of tenants may have their land on paying the proper fine and remaining unmarried; if they marry again they must pay for every messuage twopence, and for every acre threepence. All Customary Tenants must carry their grain, for milling, to one of the royal mills within the Forest: all are to have

Common or Pasture for all kinds of cattle, except swine, without number. Particularly interesting is the provision that every three years the Constable of the Castle of Knaresborough shall ride or go about the Metes and Bounds of the Forest, taking with him Ancient Persons, each one of whom shall be accompanied by a Child or Boy of the Age of Ten Years, or thereabouts. Interesting, too, is the Custom of Heirlooms. After the death of a Customary Tenant, his rightful Heir is to have the deceased's best Loom, best Wain, best Rope, best Plough, best Caldron, best Cupboard, best Table, best Pot, best Pewter, best Team—he is, in short, to have the best of all that has been left. Significant is the provision that no Customary Tenant shall let any part or parcel of his land to any Stranger or Foreigner —one learns from it, and from certain other clauses, that the rights and privileges of the Forest were jealously guarded.

This Forest of Knaresborough was one of six Royal forests—or of eight, if the Barnsdale district between Pontefract and Doncaster, and the extensive tract about the meeting of Ouse and Derwent are reckoned in—which in ancient days occupied no inconsiderable part of the area of Yorkshire, the others being those of Hatfield, Galtres, Pickering, Skipton, and Wensleydale. Nowadays the word is much misunderstood, and most folk think of a forest as of a tract of land thickly covered by trees. But " the English word *forest*," says Dr. Cox, " signified in Norman, Plantagenet, and early Tudor times, a portion of territory consisting of extensive waste

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lands, but including a certain amount of both woodland and pasture, circumscribed by certain metes or bounds, within which the right of hunting was reserved exclusively to the King and his nominees, and which was subject to a special code of laws administered by local as well as central ministers." Very little of the space included in the Yorkshire forests was tree-covered, and the legend that the Cistercians of Fountains Abbey cut down the whole of the trees in Knaresborough Forest for their forges may be dismissed as mere tradition having no basis: the greater part of the extensive area (twenty miles from east to west, and eight miles from north to south) was precisely what it was described as being at the time of the Enclosure Act of 1770—open, commonable, or waste land. Within this area there were in 1085 only four townships: Birstwith, Fewston, Beckwith, and Rosset. In 1368 there were three: Thruscross, Clint, and Killinghall, sub-divided into sixteen hamlets, and at that period the entire population, including Knaresborough, as centre of the district, must have been very inconsiderable. Such it was, apart from the military garrison at Knaresborough Castle, it lived the life of moorland folk, cut off from the world, existing in wide spaces, dark valleys, and by the banks of numerous streams, tributaries of the Nidd on its northern confines and of the Wharfe on the south, and into its innermost recesses probably none but the Greave or the Constable ever cared to penetrate.

There were reasons why Knaresborough should

become the centre of this wild and solitary region. The river Nidd, after rising in the high grounds to the west, flows at Knaresborough into a deep and romantic channel, overhung at one part by a high rocky plateau which commands the country on all sides but one, and in that respect much resembles the promontory on which the town of Richmond is built, overlooking the river Swale. On this plateau there was doubtless a Saxon stockade or fortification, of the type commonly erected on similar points of vantage, and hence, later, it was replaced by the castle. But the castle was certainly not built as early as some of the historians of Knaresborough have supposed, nor by Serlo de Burgh, to whom most of them have attributed it, and who appears to have been not grantee of the Manor and Honour, but merely *custos* of the place for a time. In the Domesday Survey there is no mention of any castle or church or mill in Knaresborough, and the probability is that the whole district had been wasted at the time of the Harrying of the North. But there are documents which show that the building of the Castle was in process during the reigns of Henry I. and of John :—

i. " Pipe Roll, 31st Henry I. York and Northumberland. Eustace Fitz-John renders account of £22 of the farm of Burg (Aldborough, near Boroughbridge) and of Chenaresburgh (Knaresborough). In the Exchequer £11, and in the King's works of Chenaresburgh £11, by the King's Writ. And he is quit."

ii. "Close Roll, 8th John. The King to the Barons, etc. Account to Brian de Insula, for that which he has reasonably laid out, by the view and testimony of lawful men, in the works of the Castle, and our houses in the Castle of Knaresborough by our command.—Witness ourself at York, on the 28th of May."

iii. "Close Roll, 9th John. The King to the Barons, etc. Account to Brian de Insula, for that which he has laid out, by the view and testimony of lawful men, in making the ditches of the Castle of Knaresborough.—Witness ourself at Marlborough, on the 17th March."

And the following extract seems to show that by the beginning—or soon after the beginning—of the reign of Henry III., the Castle was finished :—

iv. "Close Roll, 7th Henry III. Of the Castle of Knaresborough. The King to the Barons of the Exchequer greeting. Know ye that we, some time since, granted to our trusty and beloved Brian de Insula our Castle of Knaresborough with the town of Knaresborough, and all its appurtenances, to be kept during our pleasure, rendering therefore yearly the old farm of £50 at our Exchequer. And therefore we command you that you allow that grant to the same Brian, so that you exact nothing further from him in respect of the abovesaid custody than the aforesaid £50 yearly, as

aforesaid, until we shall therein otherwise command.—Witness, the King, at Westminster, 30th May."

Here reference is made to "the town," but there is little in the oldest records to show of what size the town had become at this time. It was probably no more than a few houses closely clustered about the newly built castle: town and castle must have been singularly isolated in the midst of the sparsely populated Forest. But during that century mention begins to be made of various places in the Forest which still retain the names by which they were then known. Several of them are found in the Chartulary of Fountains Abbey. Edmund, son of Richard, King of Germany and Earl of Cornwall, gives to the Abbot and monks of Fountains *housebote* (wood for household purposes) and *haybote* (wood for fencing) in the Forest of Knaresborough, of which, under Edward I., he was guardian during the King's absence in the Holy Land; he also grants them the honey and bees found in the woods, and he allows them to enclose one wood, but in such a manner—"with fosse and fence"—that the wild beasts may not gain access to it.

The origin of the name Knaresborough, from whence the entire district came to be similarly called, is given by Hargrove as from *Knares* a hard knot (as Hard Knot, near Sca Fell) and *burgh*, a fortified place. Speight, however, derives it from the Celtic *Cnare* A.S. *Neer* = lower, and says it was the lower fort, in contradiction to Aldburgh, the old camp, seven miles to the North. But the

much more probable derivation is that given by the late Canon Greenwell, and shared in by Mr. G. T. Clark: that it comes from the O.E. *Cneores*, a family race or tribe, and was originally the tribes' town or fort. In the ancient documents, and in the Fountains Chartulary, the name is given under various forms and in many different spellings—but it has existed, in one form or another, as applied to town or Forest, for nearly a thousand years. So have the names of many of the places in its vicinity. But of the name Harrogate it is difficult to find any early mention. It does not occur in any old charter. Hargrove, writing of it a hundred years ago, calls it then a hamlet, and says it originated from a few cottages standing on the "gate" (= road) leading from Knaresborough to Heywra-Park, and was so called Heywragate. As regards this, Professor Moorman made some comments a few years ago in the *Yorkshire Post*:—"The most primitive of the forms of Harrogate," he says, "is Heyragat, but Heywra is not an English word, nor is Havra (or Haverah) its Norman-French form. The word Heywragat is pure Scandinavian, being made up of the three words hey = hay, wra = a corner, and gat = a road. So that the meaning of Heywragat is the road to the corner of enclosed land where grass was grown for hay; or, more simply, the road to the hayfield. The name Haverah, in Haverah Park, is quite different, though also Scandinavian. The termination is again the word *wra*, a corner, but the first element is the Scandinavian word hafri = oats, which is also found in such place and personal

names as Havercroft, Haverfield, Haverthwaite. The underlying history of the two names would seem to be somewhat as follows :—At a time when Scandinavian was still spoken in the Knaresborough district, *i.e.* between the end of the ninth and the twelfth centuries, two pieces of moorland on the outskirts of Knaresborough Forest were enclosed and cultivated. On the one enclosure oats were grown, while the other became a hayfield. The peasant or peasants who farmed this hayfield needed a cart-track across the moors in order to bring their hay home, and this cart-track to the hayfield, this 'heywragat,' as they would have called it, is the original road along which cottages were subsequently built, and where the town of Harrogate is now situated."

Now this proves a highly interesting fact—that instead of Harrogate being the entirely modern place which most people believe it to be, it is really of considerable antiquity, since (whether it was then one cottage, or two cottages, or twelve cottages) it was actually in existence not later than the twelfth, and possibly as far back as the ninth century. It was, of course, a mere speck, an insignificant point, in the vast stretch of the Forest of Knaresborough, so insignificant, indeed, that it does not come into the documentary evidence for a very long time. But it was there, just as a great many small places in the Forest were there. As time goes on, one hears of them in charters, rolls, returns, lists. Many of them figure in the *Nomina Villarum*, made in the ninth year of Edward II. : some of them are there

stated to belong to the King; some to the Prior of Bolton; some to the Archbishop of York; some to families of great repute in their day, every one of which is extinct save the Middletons of Middleton. In the chartularies of the religious houses of these parts the references to these obscure places in the Forest are many: a toft is given in one; a messuage in another; the Abbot has certain privileges in this place; the Prior has others in that: there is always evidence that, small as these Forest villages and hamlets were, and however little their population increased, they were always there, changing in such infinitesimal fashion that at the end of the eighteenth century they were very much what they had been five hundred years before. But in the midst of the Forest the town from which it took its name changed much, and became the scene of some of the most romantic passages in Yorkshire history, and the birthplace of some exceedingly remarkable and even justly famous people.

II. THE MURDERERS OF THOMAS BEKET

ONE of the first of the many romantic episodes in the history of Knaresborough is connected with one of the most famous events in English history : the murder of Thomas Beket, Archbishop of Canterbury, in his own cathedral, by four knights, Hugh de Moreville, Reginald Fitzurse, William de Tracy, and Richard le Bret. Around these four has been woven a Knaresborough tradition. According to the commonly accepted version of it, the four murderers, their deed accomplished, fled north to Knaresborough, secured themselves in the Castle, and there abode for a year, subject not only to bitter remorse, but to strange manifestations of Divine wrath. Animals shrank away from them ; the dogs refused the crumbs which fell from their table. Tortured at last beyond endurance, they set out for Rome, confessed their terrible crime to the Pope, and were sent to the Holy Land. There three of them died and were buried ; the fourth, Tracy, suffered a horrible death on the coast of Calabria. All this, and much more, is found in monkish chroniclers like Roger of Hoveden and John of Brompton, and in the Middle Ages every

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word of it was believed, and nowhere more firmly than at Knaresborough. The idea of the four knights in their self-imposed imprisonment, scorned by men, avoided by beasts, frowned upon by the Deity, appealed to the medieval mind and conscience, and folk looked on the Castle of Knaresborough as having been under an awful cloud of Divine justice during the year of their stay in its dark vaults. But the legend is legend and no more, though it is easy enough to see how it arose, and how it developed in days when legend was eagerly accepted.

During the reign of Henry II. mention begins to be made in the Pipe Rolls of one Hugh de Moreville in connection with Knaresborough, where the Castle was evidently in course of construction. In 1161 there are several entries:—"In lands given to Hugh de Moreville £40 *blanch* in Cnardesburg. In operationes castelli de Cnardesburc £90—and there the Castle is named. The same sheriff renders account of £64 of the farm of Burc and Cnardesburc, *numero*. In the Treasury, £20. In lands given to Hugh de Moreville £19, *numero*." There are more entries relating to him in 1164 and in 1169, both giving particulars of additional grants. Who was Moreville? According to Stanley's "Memorials of Canterbury," he was a man of high rank and office, Justice Itinerant of the Counties of Northumberland and Cumberland, holder of the Barony of Burgh-on-the-Sandes, Forestes of Cumberland, and "owner" of Knaresborough Castle—he was, as regards Knaresborough, Custodian for the Crown. He married

Helwise de Stuteville, daughter of a family which had a close connection with Knaresborough ; altogether, he was intimately associated with the district, and with the ruling families of the North of England —a fact which must be remembered when we come to the flight of his associates and himself to Knaresborough from Canterbury after the murder of Beket. The associates, too, were closely connected with the North, le Bret with the Stutevilles, Tracy with the Romillies. Here, then, we see at once that when the murderers fled from Canterbury northward they were not fleeing, as the legend suggests, into terrible and unknown wilds, instigated by awful remorse and by desire to hide their guilty faces from the sight of men, but to a place and to people whereat and amongst whom they were very well known.

In order to get at a clear idea of why the four knights came to Knaresborough at all, it is necessary to go back to the day on which Henry II., irritated by the accounts of Beket's doings furnished to him by the emissaries of the Archbishop's enemies, asked impetuously if there was none amongst those that ate his bread who would rid him of " this turbulent priest ? " This was on some day towards the end of December, 1170—some chroniclers fix the day as the 24th, some as the 27th—and the place was Bure, near Bayeux, in Normandy, where Henry was then keeping his court. Amongst those present were de Moreville, Fitzurse, Tracy, and le Bret, who either there and then resolved to take the King at his word, or had already made some secret resolution of their own in concert with Beket's

enemies. If the King's famous exclamation was uttered on the 27th December, the four knights must have left Bure at once, for on the 28th they arrived at Saltwood Castle, in Kent, which, though it belonged to the See of Canterbury, was at that time occupied by Beket's chief enemy, Ranulf de Broc, whom the Archbishop had once called "the son of perdition." There, welcomed by him, the four spent that night, and, in collusion with him, agreed upon their next proceedings. It is said that they carried on their conference in total darkness, not daring to see each other's faces while they plotted the Archbishop's murder—this, in view of the determination which they showed all along may be set down as mere legend. From first to last the conduct of all four was that of men who had set out to do a certain deed, and meant to do it thoroughly. Next morning, Tuesday, the 29th December, they rode into Canterbury, resolved that by nightfall the "turbulent priest" should no longer trouble their royal master.

The late Dean Stanley, in the article on the murder of Beket, which he contributed to the *Quarterly Review* in 1853, pointed out that Tuesday had always been a significant day in Beket's life. "On a Tuesday he was born and baptised; on a Tuesday he had fled from Northampton; on a Tuesday he had left the King's Court in Normandy; on a Tuesday he had left England on his exile; on a Tuesday he had received warning of his martyrdom in a vision at Pontigny; on a Tuesday he had returned from that exile; it was now on

a Tuesday that the fatal hour came, and (as the next generation observed) it was on a Tuesday that his enemy King Henry was buried; on a Tuesday that the martyr's relics were translated; and Tuesday was long afterwards regarded as the week-day especially consecrated to the saint, with whose fortunes it had thus been so strangely interwoven." On this last Tuesday of all, Beket himself seems to have had some premonition that evil was at hand—nevertheless, when the four knights were admitted to his presence after dinner, where he sat in the midst of his attendant clergy, they found his countenance as fresh, majestic, and striking as ever they had known it in the days when he was Chancellor of England and the favourite of the King who now desired, or had seemed to desire, his death.

Of the actual doings of that December day in Canterbury there is no need to write here—they are told in every English history. There was the bitter and acrimonious discussion between the Archbishop and the four knights; the withdrawal of the four to the sycamore tree in the garden, where they threw off their cloaks and gowns, revealed the armour beneath, and girt on their swords; the procession of the Archbishop to vespers; the breaking into the church by the knights; the flight of many of the monks and clergy; the awful scene in the transept still known as the Martyrdom; the first murderous blow from Tracy; the last from le Bret—of such violence that the murderer's sword snapped on the marble pavement—and then the flight. But it was not a flight of men already stricken by remorse.

They and their followers plundered and pillaged right and left—gold, silver, vestments, books, furniture, horses: Fitzstephen reckoned the value of the plunder at two thousand marks. And at last that was done, and the murderers passed out of the precincts amidst a terrible storm of thunder and rain into a black winter's night. Of the four, one man only was actually innocent of a blow: de Moreville had stood by, keeping off the crowd, while his companions did the work.

Now began the flight which was to end at Knaresborough; now began, too, if the monkish legends are to be credited, the extraordinary manifestations which signified the Divine wrath. The four knights rode back to Saltwood, glorying in the crime they had committed; at Saltwood they passed the night. Next day they rode forty miles south, to Lewes, in Sussex, where, in the suburb called Malling, there was an archiepiscopal manor. Popular tradition affirms that when Moreville and his three companions entered the house they took off their armour and weapons and placed them on a table in the dining-hall; and that soon afterwards, as they stood around the hearth, the various trappings were violently flung to the floor by some unseen hand. They were replaced, only to be thrown off a second time, and to a greater distance. Tradition says, too, that one of the four was so conscience-stricken that he at once suggested that the table (which was preserved at Malling for some centuries) refused to support its sacrilegious burden. Legend of this sort, freely narrated by Grandison and

Giraldus, Brompton and Hoveden, surrounds the murderers at Knaresborough—the houses to which they turned were hung with black; birds refused to fly through the air which they polluted; dogs turned from the morsels cast from their murderous hands. According to the chronicles, each was dogged by misfortune and misery; three died far off; one, vainly endeavouring to regain his native land, perished miserably on a foreign shore.

But it is, after all, legend and tradition. The real reason why the four knights fled to Knaresborough, and took up their residence for a time in the Castle which was then in course of construction, is found in the fact that the anti-Beket influence was strong in the North of England, that all four had powerful friends and interests in Yorkshire, and that Moreville knew they would be safe in the fortress of which he was guardian for the King. According to Wheater, the Castle, though not then finished, was already a place of considerable strength; it had a garrison, and, if need had arisen, Moreville and his three guests could have offered a stout resistance to any force coming there to apprehend them. But we do not hear of any interference. The Archbishop of York, that Roger of Pont L'Evêque who was Beket's enemy, and whom the Papal Legate had called the "Arch-devil" of York, was on their side; so, too, were all the great families of the county. And in spite of the King's grief, and of his humiliation, and of his penance at Canterbury, we hear nothing of any desire on his part to punish the murderers; it may have been that he

felt himself morally bound to take all their guilt on his own shoulders. None of Beket's enemies suffered punishment. On the contrary—so far as regards the four knights—advancement and a peaceful old age appears to have been their lot. Some legends speak of a curse following them and their families until extinction followed. But Fitzurse moved over to Ireland eventually, and became the ancestor of the Mac Mahons. Le Bret founded a family which existed for many generations in Somersetshire. Tracy, four years after the murder, was in high office as Justiciary of Normandy ; his family has existed in Devonshire and Gloucestershire to the present time. Indeed, within two years of Beket's death, his murderers were all in favour at Court, and as to Hugh de Moreville's stay at Knaresborough in the meantime, what is of absolute fact is that for two and a half years after he and his three guests fled there, he exercised his custodianship in the ordinary way, and drew his full rents, undisturbed. He was alive in the first year of the reign of King John, and about that time secured a charter for a fair and market at Kirk Oswald. Never, when plain truth is told, did murderers escape human justice more easily than he and his companions.

III. THE CULT OF ROBERT FLOWER

SOMEWHERE about the time that Beket was becoming widely known as the martyred St. Thomas of Canterbury, there was a man living in a cave on the banks of the Nidd who was also destined to canonisation, and who, as St. Robert of Knaresborough, became one of the most popular of Yorkshire saints. With him the history of Knaresborough has a good deal to do; certain legends which arose after his death have also much to do with the earliest history of Harrogate. And in his case, just as in that of the connection of Hugh de Moreville with Knaresborough, so much tradition is mingled with history, so much superstitious legend with real fact, that it is difficult to distinguish the real man from the supposititious figure which the credulity of the fourteenth century set up.

Hugh de Moreville's guardianship of Knaresborough came to an end in 1174, four years after his complicity in the murder of Beket, and he was succeeded by William de Stuteville, whose name in this connection appears in a return made for that year:—"In lands given to William de Stuteville £22, in the town of Cnarres Burch held in custody for the King. The same William £22 in Burch

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(Aldborough)." He remained *custos* for some time; in 1195 we hear of him as making a gift of fuel from the Forest of Knaresborough to the Abbot of Fountains; in the Fountains Chartulary his name constantly occurs in documents relating to this period. He died in 1203, and was buried at Fountains Abbey with all the honours due to a pious benefactor. And it was during his lordship of Knaresborough and its Forest that St. Robert made his appearance there, and began the life and works which were to ensure great fame. Like many other celebrities of his sort he was by no means well received on his first appearance, for de Stuteville showed a great dislike to his presence, and it was doubtless the fact that the saint conquered the great man's aversion which first brought him into prominence and made him an object of respect amongst the lesser folk.

As to who St. Robert of Knaresborough really was accounts differ. But, when they are all compared and summed up, we may reasonably believe that the commonly accepted story about his parentage and early life has a considerable basis of fact. That story was first set forth in a curious chronicle of the later Middle Ages, probably written by one of the Trinitarians of Knaresborough, and full of legend. It was substantially included in a curious Chap-book printed by Thomas Gent, the eccentric antiquary-printer, in York, early in the eighteenth century, under the title, "Piety Display'd: in the Holy Life and Death of the Ancient and Celebrated St. Robert, Hermit, at Knaresborough." According to this, the

saint was the son of one Took Floure, or Tockless Flower, who was chief magistrate or Mayor of York in the year 1195, and who had married a lady of reputable descent, whose name was Smimera, or Semenia. Robert Flower, their son, is said to have been born in York in 1159, and from his earliest infancy to have shown signs of sanctity—" he would often secretly retire to Prayer, with a sweet juvenile Ardency which made him to be honoured by the Elders, while he was still but young; and as he grew in years, their Wonder increas'd at his Extensive Knowledge and Divine Penetration." In those days such a child naturally found his way speedily to some religious house, and there seems little doubt that Robert Flower entered upon a novitiate somewhere at a very early age. According to the chronicle, his parents placed him with the Benedictines at Whitby, with whom he abode for five years, after which period, happening to meet his younger brother, " who was at the New Monastery of Cistercians," he fell in love with the rule of St. Bernard and embraced it, remaining a Cistercian for four years more, after which he became a Hermit. But the probability is that though Robert Flower may have been at Whitby, and possibly at Newminster, in Northumberland, for certain periods, he was a monk of Fountains, who, desiring to lire the life of an anchorite obtained permission from his superiors, and betook himself to the solitudes of Nidderdale.

Anyway, at some period during the lordship of William de Stuteville, Robert Flower was a hermit

in the neighbourhood of Knaresborough, living in "a dreary cavity in the Low Part of a prominent Rock," and cultivating some ground which had been given to him by "a rich Matron," who was probably one of the Percies of Spofforth. One day William de Stuteville passing by his retreat enquired of his servants who lived in it?—they answered, "Robert, a Holy Hermit." "No," said he, "rather a receiver of thieves," and bade them destroy it. Thereupon Robert removed himself closer to Knaresborough, and in the cliffs overhanging the Nidd made another hermitage, which, de Stuteville espying, also resolved to destroy. But that night he had a vision of such a terrible character that it melted his hard heart, and next day he visited the Hermit, gave him a piece of land, and supplemented his gift with two Oxen, two Horses, and two Cows.

Here we see the monkish version of an endowment: de Stuteville doubtless gave Robert Flower certain lands and goods. And forthwith the hermit is safely established, and becomes a permanent feature of society in the neighbourhood. Very soon he is credited with the possession of miraculous powers; he cures a broken limb by laying his hand upon it; certain deer, from the Forest, which spoil his corn, are so tamed by his touch that he is able to put them under yoke, and plough his ground with them; birds and beasts respond to his call. There is now no question of turning him away from the quarters he has chosen, and he begins to work at his new chapel, or oratory, which he excavates (wonderful to relate, by ordinary means, instead of

by miracle) out of a solid and high rock. His reputation increases; so much so that King John, coming to Knaresborough on one of his many visits, must needs go to see him, and is so charmed by his conversation, his courteous manner, and extraordinary piety, that he gives him forty acres of waste ground. About this time he began to utter prophecies; one was that when his death should occur, the monks of Fountains would attempt to carry off his corpse, "but," said he to those about him, "I beseech you to resist them; and if there be occasion, do not fail to call secular power to your assistance, for in some part of the place belonging to that where I shall give up my latest breath there indeed I would have my body remain in peace, I hope, till a Blessed Resurrection shall recall it from the dust." According to the legends, this prophecy was fulfilled; the Cistercians of Fountains endeavoured to carry off the Saint's body on his demise (24th September, 1218, according to the *Lanercost Chronicle*), which they certainly would have accomplished, had not a company of armed men, that belonged to the Castle, resisted them; and so "they were obliged to return home exceeding sorrowful for so great a loss." Then the folk of the neighbourhood, "High and Low, Rich and Poor," coming in great crowds, laid the saint in his own chapel, and covered his remains with a slab of stone which, in later times, was transferred to the Parish Church to cover the grave of Sir Henry Slingsby, and may be seen in the Slingsby Chapel to this day.

Here comes in a connection between St. Robert

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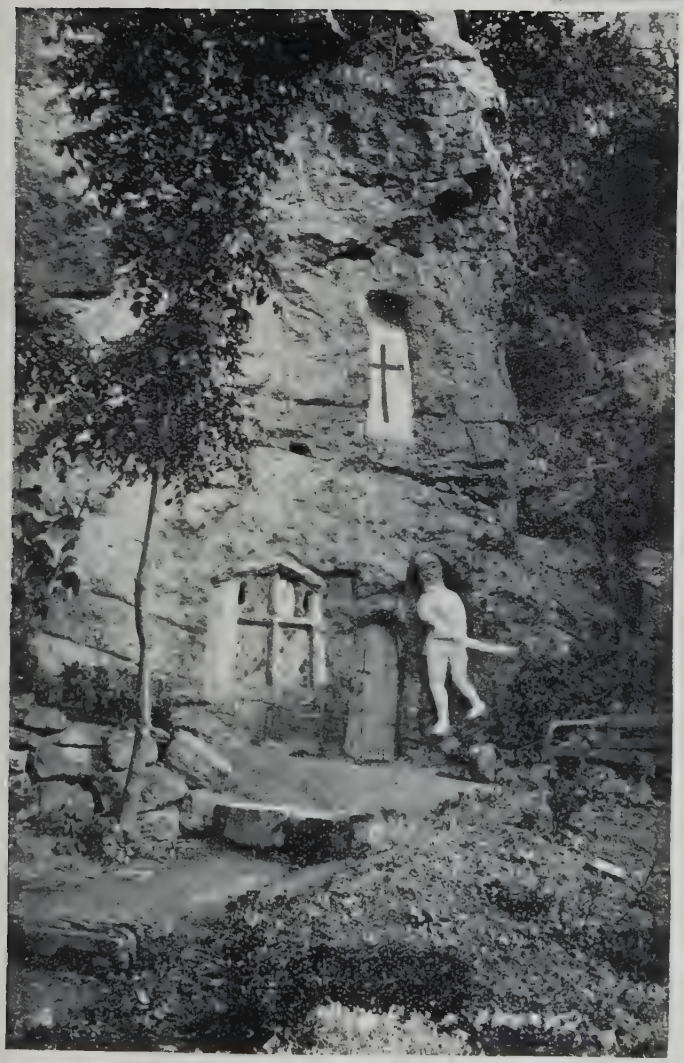

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ST. ROBERT'S CHAPEL

Reflected Public

of Knaresborough and the medicinal waters of the neighbourhood, now and for long chiefly associated with Harrogate. Matthew Paris says that the fame of St. Robert, Hermit of Knaresborough, soon shone conspicuously all over the countryside, because from his sepulchre a medicinal oil plentifully issued forth. Now upon this Wheater makes some remarks which are well worth consideration: he takes the observations of Matthew Paris as showing that what we now call "Harrogate Water" was well known and in high repute early in the thirteenth century. "That the fame of the Forest as a watering-place had spread so far [as St. Albans, where Matthew Paris was a monk] is," he says, "conclusive that it was of no mere passing repute. Our much earlier ancestors were not ignorant of the water-cure. The Romans in Britain understood the virtues of bathing; and enjoyed it at Harrogate, without a doubt. It is hardly credible that the springs of Knaresborough would escape notice. All the old British track-ways across the Forest converge to the old Sulphur-Well at Harrogate." We may take it, therefore, that the medicinal oils written of by the old chroniclers in connection with St. Robert were really the mineral waters of the district, already resorted to by crowds, and that those who desired to accord miraculous powers to the saint calmly attributed their virtues to him.

But that there was vast belief in St. Robert as a local saint is shown by the next proceeding. Sometime during the reign of Henry III., probably about thirty years after the saint's death, Richard,

Earl of Cornwall and King of the Romans, who was then lord of the Honour of Knaresborough, founded in the town the religious house known as the Trinitarian, or Order of St. Robert, Friary. Tanner, in his "Notitia," says the house was instituted by St. Robert himself: Burton, in his "Monasticon," makes no mention whatever of it. But founded it was about this time, and there is a charter of Edward II., dated 1311, which confirms a previous one; in it the religious are referred to as the Brethren of the Holy Trinity for the Redemption of Captives. Various charters, grants, and gifts were made to this foundation in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: in one of 1473 its full title is set forth: "The House of St. Robert near Knaresborough, of the Order of the Holy Trinity, and the Redemption of Captives who are imprisoned amongst Pagans for the faith of Jesus Christ." From some of these early charters and grants it would appear that the possessions of the Trinitarians of Knaresborough were at one time fairly considerable. Certainly they suffered terribly during the reign of Edward II. from the Scots, who came marauding in these parts, and in 1318 they are returned in the *Nova Taxatio* as being worth no more than £5 a year. But during the fourteenth century much property was given to them, and several advowsons, and if the few fragments of their architecture are to be taken as specimens of their house and church their establishment was one of some pretensions. Those fragments, however, are chiefly to be found in the walls of farmsteads and cottages; cloister and church were

completely destroyed at the time of the Dissolution, and no trace of them was seen for three centuries.

When the house was surrendered, in December, 1538, it was one of the poorest in Yorkshire. According to the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, it was then worth £35 10*s.* 11*d.* There were eight inmates—Thomas Kent, Minister, and seven priests, one of whom could not write his name. Kent received £13 6*s.* 8*d.*, as pension; John Trumballe had £5; the others received lesser amounts, in degree. Blitheman, the Commissioner, accounted for 3 cart horses, 8 working oxen, 4 draught horses, 6 cows, 20 pigs; the utensils of the forge sold for 6*s.* 8*d.*, the vestments for £3 18*s.* 10*d.*; in the granary at Wixley there was store of grain worth £17 2*s.* 8*d.* He reckons 18 fothers of lead, and says the five bells found in the belfry weighed 7000 lbs.; these he reserved until the King's pleasure was known concerning them. The jewels he estimated at 80 ounces; they consisted of a crown weighing 56 ounces and two chalices weighing together 26 ounces: these he sent to the King's treasure-house. Numerous servants of the community claimed wages in arrear from him; to these he paid out six guineas; he also paid £4 10*s.* 6*d.* in the same way to the Vicars of Wixley and Fewston, who claimed money on account of their pensions. Altogether the Crown profited little by disturbing these sons of Robert Flower. As for their lands, they passed into the hands of the Slingsby family during the reign of Edward VI., and remained in them for several centuries. In 1862 some trenching operations (not undertaken in

the interests of archæology) brought to light the foundations of the church. "The building," says an account in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of that year, "was probably cruciform, and what would appear to be the north transept is already bared; the towers or turrets are placed at the angles. The ornamental work in the mouldings scattered about show the building to have been of fine and elegant workmanship, and the tooth ornament so peculiar to the style is most conspicuous. A stone coffin containing three skeletons has already been found, and it is not improbable that some very curious and interesting relics may be brought to light." Previous to this, many carved stones had been turned up on the site of the Friary, and Pennant, in his "Tour from Alston Moor to Harrogate," speaks of one in particular, which, unearthed in 1776, bore on one side the arms of the house, and on the other a representation of ships and of men and women in the habit of slaves. But of Robert Flower himself there have always been strangely interesting and romantic memorials in Knaresborough, in the reputed St. Robert's Chapel and St. Robert's Cave, which for many a generation have attracted the sight-seeing visitor as well as the historian and the antiquary. These, in 1916, were put up to auction with some other property of the Slingsby family, and, being bought by the Rt. Rev. Prior Cummins, O.S.B., were thus rescued from secular, and restored to religious, uses. But here, if one is to be candid, it had better be stated that much of what has been written, at times, of St. Robert's Chapel, is more or

less erroneous. It is almost impossible that the cavity can ever have been his habitation; it was, no doubt, in real truth, a shrine-chapel made by his successors long after his death. And in the ancient Court Rolls it is never referred to in connection with St. Robert at all, but is described as the Chapel of Our Lady of the Crag.

IV. MEDIEVAL KNARESBOROUGH

THE Castle of Knaresborough, from the time of its completion, about the beginning of the thirteenth century, was a favourite resort of the English sovereigns. Between 1206 and 1216 King John visited it on at least seven occasions; at these times castle and town alike were filled with his followers. There are many records of the royal visits in the local documents; they cast curious sidelights on the manners and customs of those days. On one occasion, when John appears to have journeyed from Rothwell, near Leeds, to Knaresborough, the King's luggage filled five carts, each drawn by two horses, and each under the care of a sumpter-man: the cost was set down at twenty pence per man, there and back. In 1206 there is mention in the royal accounts of three bacons, six "porcos," eighteen quarters of oats, two and a half skeps of corn, and three tuns of wine "our expenditure at Cnareburg" on the Monday before Ash Wednesday; about the same date there is a bill for Queen Isabella's baths and washing, and for ham and eggs supplied to her. In 1213, when Isabella stayed at Knaresborough while John visited his Castle of Pontefract, there are more entries on the

Queen's behalf—6*s.* 11½*d.* for her baths, washing her linen, and for a pack-saddle. During one of the royal visits, in 1210, there are certain entries which seem to refer to some old custom of alms-giving: 3*s.* 1*d.* is paid by the King for the robes of the poor, "as accustomed," while 2*s.* 2*d.* is paid for 13 "zones" and as many jack-knives for the same purpose: there is also an entry of two marks paid to Nichol the Carpenter. Wheater mentions a curious entry made during one of John's visits, a gift of five palfreys made to the King by Robert de Vaux, one of his familiar associates, "for the King to hold his tongue about the wife of Henry Panel." But what it was that John might have told about this lady, who was probably one of the famous family of Paganel, does not appear.

In the Close Rolls of Henry III. there are many references to Knaresborough as a royal possession. In 1224 the King issues a mandate to the exchequer to pay to Sir J. Parvus, "going as our messenger to Cnarreburgh," twenty shillings for his expenses: in the following year he orders that the goods of Master Roger the Balister, left at Knaresborough, be forwarded without delay to the Tower of London: the Exchequer will pay the cost of carriage. In 1226 there are numerous orders issued to Walter, Archbishop of York, the holder of the Castle, to pay sums of money for repairs; there is another ordering that Robert de Plumton shall hold his wood within the Forest as of aforetime, without let or disturbance. In 1228 Henry III. granted Knaresborough, with Aldborough, Boroughbridge, and the

surrounding demesnes to Hubert de Burgh and his wife Margaret; five years later, on the fall of de Burgh, who had meanwhile been created Earl of Kent and appointed Chief Justiciary of England, these towns and lands reverted to the Crown, and were given to Richard, Earl of Cornwall, commonly known (at a somewhat later period) as King of the Romans, and second son of the late King John. During his tenure of the Town, Castle, and Honour of Knaresborough things seem to have gone towards wrack and ruin; he is said to have sold vast quantities of timber out of the Forest, and to have so neglected the up-keep of the Castle that its reconstruction was necessary early in the following century.

Between 1290 and the end of his reign, Edward I. seems to have visited Knaresborough on several occasions, and not always for the mere pleasure of hunting in the Forest. There are various entries in the accounts in which Knaresborough is mentioned. In 1290 a sum of eighty pounds is set down for the carriage of wine for the King's use from Hull to Knaresborough and some other places in the North. In 1298 William the Archer, a Lincolnshire man, is granted the royal pardon, in view of his previous military service in Flanders, for taking venison in the Forest of Knaresborough. In 1300 William de Harpenden and Robert de Furneaux, knights, are commissioned by the King to raise four hundred footmen in the Liberty of Knaresborough and Boroughbridge; Harpenden is to conduct this levy to Carlisle, and John de Selby will pay the wages.

KNARESBOROUGH

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In 1305 William de Rythre is granted royal permission to hunt foxes, hares, badgers, and cats, within the Forest, with his own dogs—it will be observed that though the wild cat is obviously referred to here, there is no mention of wolves. Edward I. was probably at Knaresborough not long before his death; it is significant that within a very few weeks of it the Castle, Town, and Honour were in possession of the man against whom he had warned his son on his death-bed—Gaveston. Under him Knaresborough received new life, and with his curious and eventful history the medieval town is closely concerned: in fact, it is from Gaveston's time as holder that the place becomes a free borough, and begins to assume its character as a principal centre in the county. Wheater gives an abstract of the charter granted to Gaveston by Edward II. in 1311; it is substantially that of the extract printed in Hargrove's Knaresborough Customs:—

"Charter granted by Edward II., 16th August, 1311 . . . to Peter de Gaveston, Earl of Cornwall . . . reciting that the Earl and his heirs shall freely enjoy the honour and manor with the parks of La Haye, Bilton, and Heywra. That Knaresborough be a Free Burgh, and the men Free Burghers. They shall have one market and one fair, with the assize of bread and ale. The Earl and his heirs shall have free share in all the land belonging to that honour; the privilege of judging malefactors taken either within or without the manor: one gibbet and one gallows for the execution of such offenders, and be entitled to all their cattle and goods; together

with all animals called waifs. They shall have users of all writs; also two Coroners, whose jurisdiction shall extend over all the County of York. The inhabitants shall be free of all fines and amercements for toll, pontage, murage, pannage, *et cetera*, throughout the whole kingdom."

After Gaveston's fall, in 1312, Edward II. handed his Knaresborough possessions over to William de Vaux, with instructions for further improvement and enlargement of the Castle. He ordered him to make a pent-house between the King's chamber and the kitchen, and to repair the royal mills, mend the fences in the Forest, and to maintain the iron mine. It was clearly the royal intention to develop the place, but before long terrible misfortunes fell upon it. In 1314, by a commission issued at York, the King ordered William of Boroughbridge and Robert de Weston to raise at once within the Liberty of Knaresborough all the available men between the ages of sixteen and sixty, horsemen as well as foot, each arrayed and equipped according to his estate, and to lead them to the King, who, in his turn, led them, as part of his forces, to Bannockburn, with what results we all know. Four years later, the Scots, under Sir James Douglas, poured over the border, and down into Yorkshire. Bribed to leave Northallerton by payment of a thousand marks; got away from Ripon, after three days of terror, by gift of a similar sum, they swept over the middle of the county and burned Skipton and Knaresborough to ashes. In each case the Castles were left comparatively

uninjured, but the small, growing towns were entirely destroyed: in the case of Knaresborough the traces of the burning have been often discovered in recent years in making excavations for building. John de Wysham was then in charge of the Castle, and he made a successful resistance, but when the Scots withdrew, the parish church, in company with most other churches of the district, was a mass of ruinous stone and charred wood, and so remained for twenty years. As for the folk, recently made free burghers, we may conclude that most of them had perished or had fled into the wild places of the Forest.

Under Edward III. the town began to revive. Married at York in 1328 to Philippa of Hainault, he gave Knaresborough to his consort as part of her dower—"the Castle, Town, Forest, and Honour of Knaresborough, of the value of £533 6*s.* 8*d.*"—and at Knaresborough the young Queen spent a good deal of her time. In 1333 she was there with a large household, and for some period of that year Edward was there, too—on April 10th he orders the Sheriff of York to send immediately to Knaresborough Castle 120 quarters of wheat, 20 quarters of beans and peas, and 80 bacon-hogs, or other salt meat. He was at Knaresborough again after the battle of Halidon Hill; during the next few years he was frequently at the Castle. Here, according to various entries in the State Papers and Court Rolls, he kept a valuable stud of horses, mares, and foals, under the charge of "valets"—Roger de Normanville at one time, John de Barton at another. During his reign the church and town were rebuilt

and began to flourish, and the improvement continued when, after the death of Queen Philippa, the possessions were granted by Edward III. to his son John of Gaunt, whose name is still associated with the district in the ruinous pile in Haverah Park locally known as John o' Gaunt's Castle, and in the hill outside Leeds whereon he is said to have killed the last English wolf.

During John of Gaunt's lordship the Poll Tax of 1379 was collected, and from it we can gain some idea of the population of Knaresborough at that time, and of the occupations of its inhabitants. One man, Robert de Nesfield, franklin, paid 3*s.* 4*d.* Two men paid 2*s.* each. Six men paid 1*s.* each. Nineteen men and women paid 6*d.* each; about forty-five persons paid 4*d.* each. The particulars of trades are few. Only one carpenter is mentioned; there is also only one draper. There are several cobblers (souters) and two or three weavers. There are no brewers, and no ale-house keepers. The total amount of the tax levied was only a little over two pounds, and the place was obviously still very insignificant. Nevertheless, it must have been steadily growing and improving during this century, if we are to take the rebuilding of the parish church as evidence. Its restoration was completed about 1345, and it was evidently carried out on much more extensive lines than those of the church destroyed by the Scottish marauders: Wheater, indeed, takes the rebuilding to imply "an enormous increase of population." But in view of the Poll Tax returns it is difficult to believe that Knaresborough was more

than a very small town when John of Gaunt died in 1399.

During the fifteenth century, various entries in local and state documents tell us something of people and events. One notable fact is an epidemic of poaching; in the first half of the century the killing of game and even of deer in the erstwhile jealously preserved Forest evidently went on to a considerable extent. Many of the poachers came from the growing towns of the neighbourhood, but there were others of more than ordinary social standing—even the local clergy and gentry were caught red-handed; the Vicar of Knaresborough offended times without number. Evidently the supervision of the Forest grew lax. There was trouble, too, about the royal mills; more than once the ruling powers had to seek the protection of the law as regards their rights: there are complaints that the tenants do not repair and sustain the mills, of which there were many, and are "in misericordia," by which one suspects that they were in arrears of rent and dues. About this time, too, a great deal of wood was cut down in the Forest; one finds entries of "twenty-six oaks cut down"; "eighteen oaks cut down"; there are entries which show that great trees were felled in Knaresborough itself—a sure proof that houses were being built and streets laid out. The names of streets begin to occur—the Mill Bank, Finkle Street, Wormwood Hill, Parson's Garden, High Street; all these begin to be met with in the documents. Once, the town foss, commonly called the Dyke, had been

surrounded by wood ; by the middle of the fifteenth century all the wood had been felled, and Briggate is heard of as evidently being a thoroughfare of importance instead of a mere track. We hear, too, of the extension of trade in the little town—tanning which was being carried on a hundred years before, appears to have become an important industry by 1450, and the name Tentergate, occurring in documents of 1430–40 shows that the home manufacture of woollen goods was already a well-established industry.

When Leland came into this neighbourhood in the reign of Henry VIII., he saw Knaresborough as it presented itself in the last stage of its medieval existence. He approached it from Aldborough, and writes of the land between as being of pasture, corn, and wood. He says that the two parks which he saw, Bilton, and Haverah, were "metely well" wooded. Knaresborough he sets down as "no great thing," "meanly builded" : its market, however, he describes as "quick." The situation of the Castle evidently impressed him much ; it stands, he says, "magnificently and strongly on a rock," having a very deep ditch hewn out of the rock "where it is not defended with the river of Nidd, that there runneth in a dead stony bottom." He counted eleven or twelve towers in the walls of the Castle, and one "very fair" within the area. The river was then crossed by two bridges of stone : a little above one of them he saw the Dropping Well, "of a wonderful nature" ; he is at some pains to explain its so-called "petrifying" properties. Also he saw

"a chapel in a rock," but he does not connect it with St. Robert, whose Priory he also visited. As for the great Forest, he says it was then "full of ling-moors and mosses, with stony hills," and was already, for the most part, denuded of its wood.

V. MOTHER SHIPTON

LELAND'S account of Knaresborough, compared with those which he gives of some other Yorkshire towns of equal fame, is somewhat lengthy, and it is therefore all the more remarkable that he makes no mention whatever of the notorious Mother Shipton, who, if the accepted tradition is true, ought at the time of his visit to have been at the very height of her local celebrity. But though he says a good deal about the Dropping Well, with which natural curiosity her name is chiefly associated, he says nothing about her, and the inference is that though he apparently stayed long enough in the town and neighbourhood to make himself well acquainted with their chief features and a good deal of their history, he never even heard of the sybil who ranks high amongst English prophets. According to local tradition, Mother Shipton was one Ursula Southill, born at Knaresborough, in a cottage near the Dropping Well, in 1488. She married Tobias Shipton, said to be a native of Shipton, near York, and lived with him at that place as well as at Knaresborough. At Shipton she is said to have died, in 1561, and a tombstone in the churchyard, bearing a doggerel inscription, was at one time reputed to be hers.

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THE PROPHESIE OF MOTHER *SHIPTON*

In the Raigne of King *Henry* the Eighth.

Fortelling the death of Cardinall *Wolsey*, the Lord *Percy* and others, as also what should happen in insuing times.

LONDON,
Printed for *Richard Lownds*, at his Shop adjoyning to Ludgate. 1641.

She is said to have uttered many remarkable prophecies in her day; to have foretold the downfall of Wolsey, the dissolution of the Religious Houses and the coming of James I., and many other minor matters which eventually came to pass. Now, when Leland visited Knaresborough, at least two of these prophecies had come to pass, and it is a curious fact that if their maker lived in the town, and had the fame in the district which she afterwards certainly enjoyed, his attention was not drawn to her presence and her story.

But the history of Mother Shipton, whose association with Knaresborough is now so firmly fixed that one may well believe it likely to continue for ever, affords but one more example of the fact that a vast mass of literature may easily spring up around an originally obscure personage. Supposing her to have had a real existence as Ursula Shipton of Knaresborough (which is highly problematical), to have been born, as legend says she was, in 1488, and to have died in 1561, it is still a fact that nothing is known of her in print until she had been dead nearly a hundred years. In the Sloane MSS., 647–4, fol. 89, there is a piece headed "A Prophecy found in ye manuscript in ye year 1620," which may bear some reference to her: Allen, one of Yorkshire's many historians, and Hargrove, the historian of Knaresborough, mention—following local tradition—that her prophecies had been preserved in manuscript in the family of a Lord P——, which may mean Lord Powis, or, much more likely, Lord Percy. But it was not until

1641 that the known literature of Mother Shipton really began. In that year Richard Lownds, "at his shop adjoining to Ludgate," published a quarto tract of four pages, the first having a rough cut as title, which he called "The Prophesie of Mother Shipton in the Raign of King Henry the Eighth. Foretelling the death of Cardinal Wolsey, the Lord Percy and others, as also what should happen in coming times." In the same year, also in London, T.V., published another four-page tract entitled, "A True Coppy of Mother Shipton's Last Prophesies as they were taken from one Joane Waller in the year of our Lord 1625 who died in March last 1641, being ninety-four yeares of age." A third four-page tract followed in the same year; in it Mother Shipton's prophecies are given as supplementary to those of Master Brightman, Otwell Binns, Scottish Merlin, and Ignatius.

This was the beginning of a whole body of Mother Shipton literature. During the next sixty years numerous Mother Shipton books, pamphlets, and tracts issued from the press. In 1642 G. Smith of London printed "Two Strange Prophesies"; one found in the reign of Edward the Fourth; the other "named Mother Shipton": two more pamphlets followed in the same year. Each of these three bore cuts of Mother Shipton on the front page. In 1645 William Lilly included Mother Shipton in his "Collection of Ancient and Modern Prophesies." More pamphlets and tracts followed in 1648 and again in 1663. In 1667 Mother Shipton's fame had spread to Holland, and a Dutch

translation of one of the foregoing books or tracts was published by Crispijn Hoekwater. In the same year W. Harris, of London, printed "The Life and Death of Mother Shipton"; in 1682, 1684, 1686, and 1687 there were new editions of this and similar productions. And about the time of the Revolution, Mother Shipton had been presented on the stage, for in 1688 T. T. [Thompson] of London, printed, in quarto, "The Life of Mother Shipton: a New Comedy, as it was acted nineteen days together with great applause." Before this, indeed, Mother Shipton was quite famous in high society and places; Pepys, in his Diary, says, under date October 20th, 1666, that Sir Jeremy Smith told him he was with Prince Rupert when the news came of the burning of London, "and all the Prince said was, that now Shipton's prophecy was out."

During the eighteenth century, only four books, or new editions of the various previous publications appeared: one of them is noteworthy as purporting to be "collected from the Ancient Caledonian Chronicle in the Scottish dialect"; it was issued by J. Davenport, in London, in 1797, and in it Mother Shipton is credited with the possession of a daughter, Peggy, though, according to Knaresborough tradition, she and Toby Shipton, her carpenter-husband, never had any children. But in the nineteenth century the literature increased amazingly. Nearly forty separate publications, ranging from volumes to chap-books, appeared between the years 1800–1881, to say nothing of

numerous magazine and newspaper articles, or of questions and answers in such publications as *Notes and Queries*. They came from the provincial as well as from the London press—from Newcastle, Stirling, Coventry, Derby, Otley, Liverpool, Bristol, Taunton, Grimsby, Leeds, and, of course, Knaresborough. Some of these productions were of a more or less learned nature; most were of the chap-book or fortune-telling order. One, "Mother Shipton Investigated," was "the result of critical examination in the British Museum Library, of the literature pertaining to the Yorkshire sybil," by W. H. Harrison, one of whose chief contributions to the subject is that on comparing the first two versions of the prophecies, those of 1641, and Lilly's of 1645, he finds them to agree, in substance.

Of one of these modern versions, the 12mo of 32 pp., reprinted in 1862 from the Harris edition of 1687 "and to be had of the booksellers and all Railway Stations," it is necessary to write with some detail, because it is from it that folk of to-day gather their knowledge of the old Knaresborough prophetess. It contains a lot of doggerel rhyme in which Mother Shipton is supposed to prophesy a good deal that has come to pass during the last sixty or seventy years. Reference, for instance, is made to the Crystal Palace and the Crimean War :—

> "A house of glass shall come to pass
> In England—but alas!
> War will follow with the work
> In the land of Pagan and Turk."

And to railways—

> "Carriages without horses shall go,
> And accidents fill the world with woe."

And to the electric telegraph—

> "Around the world thought shall fly
> In the twinkling of an eye."

And to ironclad ships—

> "Iron in the water shall float
> As easy as a wooden boat."

And to popular education—

> "All England's sons that plough the land
> Shall be seen book in hand."

Now, if Mother Shipton, living in the days of Henry VIII., had really prophesied these things, she would have been a very remarkable woman indeed. But as a matter of fact, these lines and all the rest are pure fabrication. The 1862 reprint of the Harris pamphlet of 1687 was "got up" for the bookshops and railway bookstalls by Charles Hindley, who, in a communication to *Notes and Queries*, at a later date, admitted that he wrote all this doggerel in order to make the edition sell. Nor is this by any means the only instance in which the old Knaresborough woman has been credited with prophesyings which she never made.

How much, then, may we credit her with? Out of all the mass of literature which has grown up around her, there are three principal pamphlets which are worth some consideration—the Lowndes tract of 1641; the Conyers of 1686; and the

Harris of 1684. In the first, which filled but three pages of type, we probably have the gist of what popular tradition had been attributing to Mother Shipton for some eighty years before any printer put her name and sayings in type. It is there said that Cardinal Wolsey, having heard that the wise woman of Knaresborough had declared that he should never "come at York," sent the Duke of Suffolk, the Lord Percy, and the Lord Darcy to interview her at Knaresborough. "She bade them welcome, calling them all by their names, and sent for some cakes and ale, and they drunk and were very merry." During the interview she prophesied the Cardinal's fall; told Percy that his body should be buried in York and his head carried into France; made some cryptic reference to Darcy's fate, and informed the Duke that in time he should be as "low" as she herself was. She added some general remarks which, ingeniously twisted, might have been taken, subsequently, to foretell much of what came to pass, but which, looked at from another standpoint, were little more than the guesses of a shrewd person who had the wit to see how certain things were tending.

In the Harris pamphlet of 1684 we are at once confronted with palpable invention. Whoever wrote it was sure of his market, and laid himself out to give his customers all that they wanted. Here is all the old machinery of superstition, witchcraft, magic, and the like. Mother Shipton is the daughter of one Agatha Shipton, a maid of Knaresborough, and of the Devil, who came to visit her "in the

form of a very handsome young man." The offspring, of course, is of a sort rarely seen; it had teeth "like the tushes of a wild Bore," and its nose and chin nearly met, after the proper fashion of witches. From the time it was at nurse it was visited by Familiar Spirits; its infantile doings evinced terrible commotion amongst the neighbours. As a girl, it began to prophesy, and folk came from far and near to listen to its sayings. These preliminaries over, the Harris pamphlet falls into line with the Lowndes tract of 1641, and practically repeats what is there told. But it then goes on with many and marvellous additions: it introduces the Abbot of Beverley, an absolutely mythical personage, and gives an enormous list of prophecies which are not referred to at all in the first account. Altogether, we may take the 1684 pamphlet as having been the work of a bookseller's hack of that period, who wished to give his readers plenty of sensation and horror for their money.

The Conyers pamphlet of 1686 professes to give the Strange and Wonderful History of Mother Shipton, plainly setting forth her Prodigious Birth, Life, Death, and Burial, with an exact collection of all her famous prophecies, showing how they have all been fulfilled "to this very year." It agrees with the 1684 pamphlet in that the sibyl was the child of Agatha (or, as some called her, Emmatha) Shipton and the Devil, and follows the main line of tradition in that respect. But there are not so many generous details as to the supernatural parentage, nor is Mother Shipton herself

presented as quite such a loathsome object as the 1684 writer makes her: she marries Toby Shipton in ordinary fashion and "very comfortably they lived together." The prophecies are given in detail, and explained, and the Abbot of Beverley again appears, and is credited with having taken down all the sibylline utterances in writing. Here Mother Shipton is said to have prophesied the exact day and hour of her own death, at the age of threescore and thirteen, and the pamphlet concludes with her epitaph, composed by "a Poet of that Age." We may well doubt if any poet of that age ever heard of her. In sober truth, Mother Shipton was probably some astute Knaresborough woman who had sufficient sense to see ahead a little way, at a time when changes of many sorts were imminent, and was not backward in voicing her opinions, and who accordingly gained a reputation for foresight which she herself would have been the first to laugh at.

VI. WATERS OF HEALING

WHETHER certain of the local topographers and historians are correct or not in their belief that the mineral waters of Harrogate and Knaresborough were known to the Romans, who, to be sure, were much in this neighbourhood, delving in the lead mines of Nidderdale, there seems to be little doubt that they were in some repute in the Middle Ages. There is evidence that the various royal personages and folk of high degree who spent a good deal of time at Knaresborough Castle made use of them, and the "medicinals" which were said to flow from the tomb of St. Robert were probably sulphur or chalybeate waters. Hereabouts, water has many curious properties. The Dropping Well on the Long Walk at Knaresborough—a delightful promenade under venerable trees, planted by Sir Henry Slingsby nearly two hundred years ago—has been credited for many centuries with the power of petrifaction. In the Mother Shipton Inn, near the Low Bridge, the curious visitor may see (and purchase) examples of the work its dripping water can do in turning everyday objects into stone. It has long been a popular superstition that it really does petrify

these things, and numerous Yorkshire households possess a stone bird's nest, or a stone shoe, or a stone hat which, after hanging under the streams for more years than one knows of, was at last thoroughly "petrified" and sold to the next willing customer. What the water of the Dropping Well really does, of course, is to coat these objects with a surface of tufaceous deposit of an extraordinary hardness.

But however early the mineral waters now so famous were known, we hear nothing of them between the time wherein Isabella and Philippa took their baths therein, and the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when they were re-discovered. As to that re-discovery there is information in two works published in 1626. In that year, one Edmund Deane, "Dr. in physicke, Oxon, dwelling in the City of Yorke" published a book which he entitled "Spadacrene Anglica or The English Spaw Fountaine," which he dedicated to the physicians of York, and was sold by Richard Foster, near the Minster Gate. In this he describes four springs of mineral water, at or near Knaresborough; then he goes on to tell of a fifth, in his opinion the most important one, which, situate "in the said Forest," is, he says, "commonly named by the vulgar sort Tuewhit Well," but by those "of better ranke" the English Spa, because its water resembles that of the famous acid fountains at Spa in Germany. He then proceeds to give an account of the discovery of this well, which, called Tewit Well to this day, still yields a supply at Harrogate. He

says that "about 55 yeares ago" (which would make the date 1571) one Mr. William Slingsby, a gentleman of many good parts, and of an ancient and worthy family of Knaresborough, who had travelled much abroad and knew Spa, accidentally discovered that the water of this spring agreed in all its constituents and properties with the water which he had drunk at the German watering-place. Having tried it for some time, he caused the spring to be paved and walled round, so as to protect it from the cattle. He adds that in addition to William Slingsby, Dr. Timothy Bright, who was a clergyman as well as a physician, and was sometime Rector of Methley, near Leeds, made trial of the spring; he, too, knew Spa and its waters, and was convinced that the water of the Tewit Well was quite as good as those he had used at that resort. A certain Dr. Anthony Hunter, sometime of Newark, had also heard of the water of Knaresborough and had expostulated with Dr. Deane for not noising its virtues abroad; hence Deane's book.

Another physician, Dr. Michael Stanhope, then appeared with another book—"Newes out of Yorkshire, or an account of a journey, in the True Discovery of a sovaraign Minerall, Medicinall Water, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, neere an ancient Towne called Knaresborough, not inferior to the Spa in Germany." He says of the Tewit Well that he had heard that two gentlemen of ancient descent, one named Slingsby, the other Ingilby, did for many years ordinarily drink of

this water, and that in the summer of 1625 he himself visited it, in the company of Dr. Deane, and of three other physicians, and of "a worthy knight," whose name does not appear, but who, he says, was "a curious speculator of rarities." Stanhope, having sampled the water, was overjoyed: "finding it to have a perfect *Spa* relish." He then tells of some other springs; one in Bilton Park, and another called the Pigeon Spring; to the last-named, one Dr. Short, writing of it some time later, says pigeons resorted in great numbers, "to pick up the candied sea-salts" which were much stronger than those at the shore, because of the great admixture of sulphur. Stanhope also says in this book that in the summer of 1626, Dr. Leake, a York physician, discovered another well, a mile nearer to Knaresborough, the water of which was of equal virtue with the others.

It will be observed that all these springs are described as being at Knaresborough; the only mention of Harrogate, as we now know it, is in Deane's book, in one passage of which he says that one of the wells was at "a place called Haregate Head." Six years after his first essay, Dr. Stanhope sent out a second treatise—"Cures without Care, or a Summons to all such who finde little or no helpe by the use of ordinary physick to repaire to the Northerne Spa . . . near Knaresborow in the West Riding of Yorkshire." This was printed in London by William Jones, of Red Cross Street, in 1632, and was dedicated to the famous Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford. There are certain

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new and interesting facts in it. Stanhope says that Knaresborough is "a place very apt to accommodate strangers plentifully both for diet and lodging," which seems to indicate that visitors to the "Northerne Spa" made the old town their headquarters. He also announces that in the summer of 1631 he himself made discovery of a new spring (St. John's Well) of which he has very great opinions, it possessing "an admixture of Brimstone, besides the iron and vitriall, which I take to be an aditament of worth and noblenesse." He adds that his discovery has been "set with stone, where it now stands upon its triall," and mentions three other sulphur springs, presumably discovered since 1626, by drinking of which, he says, various folk, from the Countess [Duchess] of Buckingham downwards, have been greatly benefited.

The literature continued to increase: in 1652 John French, doctor of physic in London, published "The Yorkshire Spaw, or a Treatise of four famous medicinal Wells, viz. the Spaw, or Vitrioline Well; the stinking, or Sulphur Well; the Dropping, or Petrifying Well; and St. Mugnus Well, near Knaresborow in Yorkshire"—the name Harrogate, one sees, does not yet occur in these descriptions. It is still "near Knaresborough" in the new edition of "Spadacrene Anglica," printed by Thomas Broad at York in 1654, and in "Spadacrene Eboracensis," written (and left unfinished) by the Leeds physician, Dr. George Neale, some forty years later. But Neale gives some indication

that things were moving in his time at "Haregate Head":—"It's now thirty years ago," he observes, "since I set up first warm Bathing in this water, and procured one such Vessel for a Pattern, as are used beyond the sea for that purpose; and now there are above twenty Bathing Houses kept here, with all necessary Conveniences, and all full employed in the Season." Certain remarks of his show that about the time his book was written the vicinity of the springs was being improved; a terrace, sixty yards square, was being laid out, by Dr. Stanhope's well, as a promenade for visitors who had come to drink the waters; he complains of "the Capriciousness of the Person who carried on the whole Design to aggrandise himself." Dr. Neale (whose book was not published for several years after his death, when it was edited by Dr. Short, of Sheffield) died in 1691, and it was said of him that he had attended the Spaw for sixty-seven years." If that statement is correct he must have known it before either Deane or Stanhope first drew attention to its virtues.

Although Knaresborough appears on the titles of the books published in the seventeenth century, the name Harrogate begins to occur in contemporary accounts of visits to the springs. In August, 1680, Ralph Thoresby, the famous topographer, took horse from his house at Leeds "and rid with cousin Ruth to Pannel, whither, though late enough and in the dark, we got very well." He stayed some days drinking the Harrogate waters, but he appears to have spent all his spare time in

Knaresborough, copying the inscriptions on the Slingsby monuments in the parish church. In June of the following year he "went with cousins and much company to the Spaws," and for three days "drank the sulphur water plentifully; walked much for health and recreation with the company"; his whole visit extended over a month on this occasion, and he remarks that Harrogate was "better furnished than ordinary" with interesting visitors, who appear, from his list of their names and addresses, to have come from far-off places. In August, 1682, he was once more at Harrogate, "in the good, serious company of Cousin Ibbetson," and there is a curious entry in his diary which shows that there must have been some sort of a Nonconformist meeting-house in the place in those days. For he records that on the Sunday after his arrival, "after water time in the morning," he had the opportunity to hear "good Mr. Gunter" preach, but suffered from his water dose, "which made me excessively drowsy." He heard Mr. Gunter hold forth again in the afternoon, and "was somewhat disturbed at the sight of *an informer*, who got cunningly into the meeting." However, he thanks God next day that the informer has done no harm as yet, either to him or to "good Mr. Gunter," who had once been chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, and had been preferred by the Lord Protector to the living of Bedale, whence he was ejected under the Uniformity Act. Upon this occasion Thoresby says of Harrogate that good company was scarce.

Up to the end of the seventeenth century the folk who resorted to Harrogate either lodged themselves in the few farm-houses and cottages, or lived at the inns in Knaresborough. If Hargrove is correct, the first Harrogate inn, the Queen's Head, was built in 1687: that much building was done between 1680 and 1700 is very evident from a passage in Thoresby's Diary under date June 25th, 1702:—"Rode," he writes, "to the Spas at Harrowgate . . . the place itself is so altered with new buildings, from what it was when I knew it formerly, that it helped to deceive me." Before the building of the first inn the accommodation must have been primitive enough. When the Duchess of Buckingham, Lord Fairfax's daughter, came to the Spaws to seek relief from "a severe asthma" she caused a tent to be pitched near the old well, and lived in it while she took the cure. However, there were three inns by 1700, and the folk of the farmhouses had begun to find it a profitable thing to take in the fashionables who came not only from York but from London.

But before Thoresby had begun visiting Harrogate, a lively controversy had arisen between certain physicians as to the merits of its medicinal springs and that discovered at Scarborough by good Mistress Farrow. In 1667 one Robert Wittie, a doctor of medicine and a Fellow of the Royal Society, published at York a "Description of Spaw Waters at Scarborough in Yorkshire," wherein he made some slighting remarks upon the waters of Knaresborough. This in 1669 called forth a reply

from "W. Simpson, Philo-Chimico-Medicus," who in that year published in London through Richard Chiswel, at the Two Angels and Crown in Little Britain, a treatise called "Hydrologia Chimica," wherein he discussed the waters of Scarborough, Knaresborough, and Malton. In the same year Wittie published a rejoinder, "Pyrologia Mimica," in which he contends that three pints of Scarborough water are equal in quality and efficiency to ten gallons of that of Knaresborough. The controversy was continued by Simpson, and joined in by other physicians, and in the publications issued during its course one learns some strange facts as to the extraordinary quantities of water drunk by the patrons of the wells at Harrogate. The doses range from three pints to twenty glasses. In Simpson's first book we also get an account of how the frequenters of the springs passed their time in those primitive days:—"The time of Drinking the largest Dose of the waters, actuated with the Salt of Steel," he says, "is the morning, walking, as the usual course is, and no more all day, except two glasses in the Afternoon about four of the Clock; and that but to some bodies neither, viz. to such as by experiment find it go well with them; exercising themselves by Walking, Riding, Reading, Bowling, or any other innocent Divertisement; keeping an ordinary diet of a few dishes, and those of wholesome meat, and well cook'd, without too much variety of sauces, which confounds the stomach, but to keep a hanke over it." It is evident from this that in essentials the water-cure

practice at Harrogate has not greatly changed during the last two hundred and seventy years, for people still take their nauseous cups of a morning, still exercise themselves, and are still bidden to live plainly; the only difference is that they do not now take "a Draught of Warm Ale or Sack to comfort them" on quitting the springs.

VII. CAVALIER AND ROUNDHEAD

LONG before the worthy Mr. William Slingsby discovered the virtues of the Tewit Well at Harrogate, his ancestors had been men of note in the Forest of Knaresborough. Somewhat to the north of the old town lies Scriven, a desirable place, which has been in possession of either Scrivens or Slingsbys from some date closely approximating to that of the Norman Conquest. When Domesday Book was compiled Scravinghe was a berewic of the manor of Knaresborough, and contained six carucates of land, the property of the King, and it was, like most of the country round about, in a waste condition. Very soon it passed into the hands of the Scrivens, hereditary Foresters of the Royal Forest of Knaresborough, several of whom, Gamel the Fowler, Baldwin, and Henry, we hear of during the next two centuries. During the fourteenth century the Scriven male line died out, and the whole estate passed by marriage to William de Slingsby, who is said to have hailed from Slingsby near Hovingham. Henceforward the Slingsbys of Scriven were perhaps the most important people in the neighbourhood. They became connected with

great families, with the Percies, Earls of Northumberland, with the Mallories and the Calverleys; they were knights and sheriffs; from the time when Knaresborough began to be represented in Parliament, which was during the reign of Queen Mary, their names occur frequently and regularly in the rolls of elected members. They were perhaps at the full tide of their influence and prosperity when the Civil War broke out in 1642, and it is in one of them, Sir Henry Slingsby, that much of Knaresborough's connection with the events of that period centres.

Three years after the accession of Queen Elizabeth, Peter Slingsby, Gentleman, being then porter and keeper of the Castle of Knaresborough, a survey was made of the ancient fortress, with a view to ascertaining its condition. In the Slingsby Correspondence, there is a long inventory of what was found during this survey and it is evident from what is there set down that the castle was then in a very poor state, and very sparsely fitted and furnished: only three windows had glass in them; the rest were closed in by wooden laths. Nothing in the way of repair, however, was done until 1590. At that time the castle was held by Henry Slingsby, Esquire, under lease from the Crown. It was then thoroughly renovated by order of the Earl of Cumberland, Steward of the Honour of Knaresborough, and the cost of the restoration was borne, according to ancient custom, by the foresters alone, the freeholders of the soke and liberty escaping altogether. In 1616, the castle, honour and lordship of

Knaresborough were given by James I. to his son, afterwards Charles I., and he, on his marriage, assigned them to his Queen, Henrietta Maria, in whose possession they rested when the Civil War broke out in 1642.

Here we first come into touch with Sir Henry Slingsby, the most notable man of his ancient race. When the dissensions arose between King and Commons, he, a convinced loyalist, was for Charles, and in his Memoirs, edited and published by Sir Walter Scott in 1806, he tells how he prepared to seize Knaresborough Castle on behalf of his royal master. "Being at Knaresborough," he says, "some of my tenants acquaint me that my Lord Fairfax intended that night to put some soldiers into the castle: Herewith I acquainted General Ruthen: he adviseth me to hold it myself, and draw some soldiers into it: Whereupon I got the keys of the castle: caused a bed to be carried in; and that very night comes Sir Richard Hutton, and part of the train-bands, with commission from my Lord of Cumberland to hold it for the King. So I resigned, and only laid in the castle that night, and in that room and lodging built by my father, and where I had lain when I was very young, being sent for by my father." Hutton appointed Colonel Crofts to be Governor, and he continued to hold the castle, having a number of train-band troops under him, without much adventure, until the November of 1644, when a Parliamentary force appeared and laid siege to it. This force was under the leadership of the notorious John Lilburn, who, originally a

bookbinder in London, had been convicted before the Star Chamber of publishing seditious libels, fined £5000, pilloried, whipped from the Fleet Prison to Westminster Hall, and imprisoned for three years, at the end of which he entered the Parliamentary army and became one of its principal colonels during the Northern operations: subsequently he changed sides, and fought for the King. Lilburn invested Knaresborough Castle immediately on his arrival, but having brought no artillery with him he could at first only blockade it, which he did with such effect that the garrison was reduced almost to the verge of starvation. At the end of a month, however, he got four pieces of ordnance from Helmsley, where the castle had just been heavily bombarded, and on December 20th the royalist garrison, lessened by that time to little more than a hundred men, surrendered, and were allowed to go free. Within the castle Lilburn found considerable stores of arms and ammunition, four pieces of cannon, a good deal of money, and plate of the value of £1500. The demolition of the outer works of the castle began at once, and the timber was sold to local purchasers: in 1646 Knaresborough was included with many other Yorkshire strongholds, notably Tickhill, Sandal, Middleham, and Bolton, in a Parliamentary order for destruction, and its walls were thrown down, the stone sold for building purposes, and the whole reduced to the condition in which it has practically remained ever since.

It must have been during this work of destruction

that Cromwell visited Knaresborough. Sir John Goodricke, of Ribston, who died, a very old man, in 1789, used to relate a story which had been told to him in his childhood by a Knaresborough woman, in whose father's house the great man had lodged. She was one Eleanor Ellis, and was born, according to the parish register, in 1632; she was therefore a girl of twelve at the time of the siege, and must have been fourteen or fifteen when Cromwell stayed in the town: she married one Fishwick, bore him several children, and lived until 1714. Altogether there seems every proof that she actually saw Cromwell when he stayed in her father's house, which, according to Grainge, stood near the present Crown Inn, in the High Street, and was rebuilt in 1764. Her story, as told to Sir John Goodricke, throws an interesting sidelight on the Lord Protector:—"When Cromwell came to lodge at our house in Knaresborough," she said, "I was but a young girl. Having heard much talk about the man, I looked at him with wonder: being ordered to take a pan of coals and air his bed, I could not during the operation, forbear peeping over my shoulder several times to observe this extraordinary person, who was seated at the fireside of the room, untying his garters. Having aired the bed, I went out, and shutting the door after me, stopped and peeped through the key-hole, when I saw him rise from his seat, advance to the bed, and fall on his knees, in which attitude I left him for some time; when returning again I found him still at prayer; and this was his custom every night so long as he

stayed at our house; from which I concluded he must be a good man; and this opinion I always maintained afterwards, though I heard him very much blamed and exceedingly abused."

However good a man Cromwell may have been, there was nothing particularly good about the conduct of the Parliamentary soldiers, who, either at the time of the siege, or when they held the town between 1647 and 1648, wantonly damaged the parish register. This, which began in 1561, reveals some curious things relating to the Puritan régime in Knaresborough, chiefly by omission. As in a great many other parishes, baptisms seem to have been severely discountenanced; the entry "borne" instead of "baptized" appears frequently; the clergy are no longer "vicars" but "ministers," elected "by the free choice and consent of the people." According to Hargrove, there was no religious ceremony of marriage in the town for four years; during that time sixty-six couples were united by the civil magistrates, who were usually Sir Thomas Maulerever, Baronet, of Allerton Park, or Thomas Stockdale, Esquire, of Bilton Park. Grainge gives a specimen of the certificate which these worthies issued to the folk they united:— "December 7th, 1653. William Grafton of Knaresbro' yeom. aged 23 years or thereabouts, and Ann Letham, of ye same, aged 39 years, or thereabouts, were this day married together, having first been published in ye Market-place at Knaresborough, 3 market-days according to ye Acte of Parliament, vizt. upon ye 23rd day of November, and two

market-days thereafter, in ye presence of Hen. Bullock, Thomas Field, William Busbie, and others, and of me.—Tho. Stockdale."

In the operations consequent on the siege of Knaresborough Castle, Sir Henry Slingsby took no part; after handing the castle over to Sir Richard Hutton he repaired to York, and in December, 1643, received a commission as Colonel in the royal army. He raised a regiment, very largely recruited from amongst his own tenants and neighbours, and one of his first duties was to escort Queen Henrietta Maria from Bridlington Bay after her landing from Holland, whither she had journeyed in the hope of raising funds for the Royalist cause. He was in York during the whole of the blockade and siege, and was present at the battle of Marston Moor in 1644—the turning point in the Civil War, so far as Yorkshire was concerned. After the Royalist forces marched out of York, on its surrender to the Parliamentary army, he retreated with Sir Thomas Glemham into Cumberland, and after remaining in the wilds for a time, joined Sir Marmaduke Langdale, and with him made his way to the King at Oxford, where they arrived in December. In 1645 he was present at the disaster of Naseby, and subsequently fled with Charles into Wales. In his Memoirs he gives a quaint account of something that happened there:—"The King thinks to secure himself once again amongst the mountains in Wales, some of which we found almost inaccessible, many of the troopers' horses tiring, and little accommodation to be met with, which makes me remember this

passage. When the King was at supper, eating a pullet, and a piece of cheese, the room without was full, but the men's stomachs were empty for want of meat; the good-wife, troubled with the continual calling upon her for victuals, and having, it seems, but that one cheese, comes into the room where the King was, and very soberly asks if the King had done with the cheese, for that the gentlemen without desired it."

There was no rest for Charles in Wales, and Sir Henry accompanied him across country, by various ways, to Newark. When Newark was yielded in May, 1646, he followed Charles to Topcliffe, and there, on May 11th, "where the king dined, I was commanded by the king to return home." The staunch old Royalist never saw his royal master again. He repaired to Red House, one of the Slingsby possessions, and there remained close—"since they have from York laid wait for me to take me, and I have escaped them, I take myself to one room in my house, scarce known of by my servants, where I spend my days in great silence, scarce daring to speak, or walk, but with great heed, lest I be discovered." Nevertheless, during these days he does something. "I did pare off the swarth, and did gravel that walk which is on the side of the West Orchard, which Will. Hinckes planted, and set the walk with trees on either side." In this retreat he hears news of the king from time to time, "Of his going to Holmby, to Hampton-Court, the Isle of Wight, to White-hall, and at last, which was his last day, upon the 30th of January,

1648, I hear—*Heu me! Quid heu me! Humana perpessi sumus.*" With these melancholy words he concludes his Memoirs, perhaps foreseeing that he was to end his days even as his king had ended his. And that eventually came about. After the insurrection in the West of England against the Commonwealth, which came to nothing, many of the old Royalists became suspect, and were imprisoned; amongst others, Sir Henry Slingsby, who until then had been permitted to live in seclusion, was committed to the care of the garrison at Hull. During his imprisonment there he was said to have endeavoured to corrupt certain of the officers, and he was removed to York Castle, whence later on he was carried to London, where, in May, 1658, he was charged with high treason before a specially constituted, so-called High Court of Justice. All the known facts as to what occurred go to show that Cromwell and Thurloe, his secretary, not content with having visited the old knight with heavy fine and long imprisonment, were now determined to have his life. It was in vain for him to protest that the charges brought against him in respect of his doings at Hull were largely invented, or to challenge the legality of the proceedings and the status of the Court. He was found guilty, and the usual barbarous sentence for high treason was passed upon him. Cromwell was induced by his son-in-law, Lord Fauconberg, who was Sir Henry's nephew, to change the method of execution to decapitation. On June 5th, 1658, the staunch old Royalist suffered the fate which had befallen his king ten years before,

saying no more on the scaffold on Tower Hill than that he was glad to die for being an honest man. His body was brought to Knaresborough for interment, and there lies at rest in the Slingsby Chapel of the parish church.

[illegible]

VIII. HARROGATE IN 1750

THERE were reasons why Ralph Thoresby when he went to Harrogate early in the eighteenth century after an absence of some years failed to recognise the growing place. During the time of William and Mary, English folk began to frequent the watering-places as fashionable resorts, and the habit steadily grew. Long before that, one town at least had been a gathering-place of the society people—Bath, famous since the days of the Roman occupation for its medicinal waters, had always attracted those who could afford the long and perilous journey across the sparsely populated country which lay between it and London. We know how Pepys went there in Charles the Second's time, and how he lost his way on the journey, and what were his impressions of the place. By the beginning of the eighteenth century folk were going to Bath in vast crowds; "thousands," observes Misson, "go thither to pass a few weeks, without heeding either the baths or the waters, but only to divert themselves with good company. They have music, gaming, public walks, balls, and a little fair every day." There were other places besides Bath. Buxton had long enjoyed a high reputation; Mary,

Queen of Scots, had been permitted to go there regularly during her imprisonment at Sheffield. Tunbridge Wells, being conveniently placed to London, was much in favour ; thus, according to a contemporary play, you met a very mixed assemblage, "a medley of all sorts, fops, majestic and diminutive, from the long flaxen wig with a splendid equipage to the merchant's spruce 'prentice, that's always mighty neat about the legs." Nearer still to London was Epsom, where the season began on Easter Monday ; it was a great place for the citizens, and the company was somewhat questionable. But there were at this time Spas in London itself, or in what we should now call London—at Hampstead, of which there is a memory in Well Walk, and at Acton, and at Northall, and at Sadler's Wells, which in those days used to be called Sadler's New Tunbridge Wells. By Queen Anne's time, the drinking of waters had become fashionable, and bathing in them was growing in favour ; still more fashionable was it to attend these places in the proper season, whether one drank or bathed, or only made a pretence of doing either.

Harrogate at this period was not without certain rivals in Yorkshire. Scarborough first came into fame as a Spa where medicinal water could be drunk, rather than as a sea-bathing resort. To this day its chief centre of fashionable amusement is called the Spa, and in an obscure corner of it still exists the spring which Mistress Farrow discovered a very long time ago. On the banks of the Tees, near Darlington, was Croft, at one time in great

repute; in the low-lying country between Pontefract and Doncaster was Askern, a sulphur spring in a village which still retains a genuinely eighteenth-century aspect; mineral waters were to be drunk at Ilkley and at Boston Spa; there were several places, indeed where there were springs which had much local celebrity. Sir John Floyer mentions Scarborough and Croft in his book on cold bathing; in Dr. Browne's "Account of the Wonderful Cures perform'd by the Cold Baths," he gives advice "to the Water Drinkers at Tunbridge, Hampstead, Astrope, and Nasborough." This was published in 1707, and Nasborough, of course, means Harrogate.

Bathing in the medicinal waters at these various places evidently did not come into general use until a much later period than that at which the drinking of them became popular. At Knaresborough, or rather, at Copgrove, close by, bathing seems to have begun at St. Mungo's Well, the water of which was held to be particularly efficacious in cases of rheumatism. Floyer, in his book, says that it was also much resorted to in cases of rickets in children. "Rickets," he says, "appeared first about the year 1620, and travelled into all parts of the kingdom, and it was more rare in the Northern counties, where they commonly cured it by bathing in St. Mungo's Well. . . . Children are twice or thrice dipped in, and presently taken out again, and while they are in, the officious Women at the Well are active in rubbing their backs, or the maimed Parts, but this seems only for form." There are records of women having been brought to St. Mungo's Well "in a

cripple cart" from as far off as Newcastle and Cockermouth; some of the cures effected there, if the accounts of them are true, verge on the miraculous. This well, however, fell into disuse as those of Harrogate were developed.

The "officious Women" mentioned by Sir John Floyer were evidently prominent figures in Harrogate life from an early date. Baskerville, the antiquary, who made a long journey "to see the Spaw Water at Harricate" has left a record of what befell him on his arrival. "At your first coming hither," he says, "you shall meet with a troublesome delight, and importunity among the women here almost as eager as that of the watermen of London, who shall be your servant to fill water to you when you go to the wells, or bring it to your lodging when you do not. . . . They got into our chambers before we got out of our beds, with pots of water, one crying out, 'Oh, sir, I am pretty Betty, let me serve you!' another 'Kate and Doll, sir, do let we tend you, we be so fair!' but to tell you the truth, they fell short of that, for their faces did shine like bacon rind, and for beauty may vie with an old Bath guide's ass, the sulphur waters had so fouled their pristine complexions."

During the first half of the eighteenth century the improvement which Thoresby noted in 1702 continued. More inns were built; more lodging-houses opened; diversions multiplied; the whole affair became a business. And in 1731 the author of the "Memoirs of John Buncle, Esq.," is able to give a very flattering account of the new resort.

THE OLD SULPHUR WELL, HARROGATE

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"Of all the watering-places I know," he remarks, "Harrogate is, in my opinion, the most charming. The waters are incomparable; no air can be better: and, with the greatest civility, cheerfulness, and good-humour, there is a certain rural plainness and freedom mixed, which are vastly pleasing. The lady of pleasure, the well-drest tailor, and the gamester, are not to be found there. Gentlemen of the country, and women of birth and fortune, their wives, sisters, and daughters, are, for the most part, the company. There were, at least, four-score ladies in the country dances every night, while I was there, and, among them, many fine women."

The creator of John Buncle, Esquire, it will be observed, does not say anything about provision for the spiritual needs of the new watering-place. Obviously, when Ralph Thoresby (at that time a very Puritanical Nonconformist) was there in 1680–81, there was some sort of a meeting-house, for he heard the ejected Mr. Gunter preach, and spied an informer. But up to 1743 nothing seems to have been done in the way of providing a church. In that year, however, folk began to bestir themselves, and a public subscription was instituted with the idea of building a chapel-of-ease. The principal subscriber was Lady Elizabeth Hastings, of Ledstone, well-known in Yorkshire as a most generous patron in the cause of religion and education. She was the virtual foundress of Holy Trinity in Leeds, and she endowed the Hastings Exhibition at Queen's College, Oxford, for the benefit of Yorkshire boys: we may conclude, as she gave such a handsome

subscription towards a church at Harrogate, that she was a frequenter of its wells. Other of the visitors also subscribed; the neighbouring gentry subscribed; the inhabitants subscribed. Nevertheless, six years elapsed before a sufficient sum was raised to warrant the building of the church of St. John, which was consecrated in 1749, the patronage being vested in the Vicar of Knaresborough. By general agreement of the inhabitants a certain quantity of land was enclosed within the Forest of Knaresborough, and the rents resulting from it applied to the maintenance of the clergyman in charge; when this enclosure was resumed by the Crown in 1770 special provision was made in lieu of it; special protection was made at the same time for the wells, around which two hundred acres of free ground were left. Slack as the eighteenth century is said to have been in most matters of religious observance, the new church at Harrogate appears to have not lacked for services—"at this chapel," says an old guide-book, "are prayers, every Wednesday and Friday, and a sermon every Sunday, throughout the year."

When the Young Pretender threatened an invasion of England in 1745 the folk of Harrogate and Knaresborough were treated to certain diversions of a military nature. It was greatly feared in Yorkshire that the last hope of the Stuarts would march on London by the eastern route, and that the county would once again suffer the horrors of warfare. At that time Dr. Thomas Herring was Archbishop of York, and he, being a zealous and convinced

Hanoverian, set himself to work to raise men and money in defence of George II. Money came in in quantity: so did men. £31,000 was subscribed at a meeting of nobility, clergy, and gentry in York: York itself enrolled four companies of volunteers. There was then living near Harrogate and Knaresborough a patriotic gentleman named William Thornton, of Thornville, who, minded to take a prominent part in the affairs which seemed likely to ensue, emulated the Archbishop's example in raising men, and exceeded it by promising to pay all the expenses out of his own pocket. He was very busy in the old town and the new watering-place, and in all the villages round about, during that autumn of 1745, in getting recruits; eventually he raised a whole company (one member of which was the famous Blind Jack of Knaresborough, who went a-fighting, blind though he was) and led them to Scotland, where these men of Nidderdale and the Forest took active parts in the battles of Falkirk and Culloden. When Thornton returned from this gay adventure, the inhabitants of Knaresborough presented him with "a table of silver," suitably engraved with two high-flown Latin inscriptions. But he was destined to receive an even greater compliment. Being shortly afterwards at Court in London, in company with his wife, he was accosted by his sovereign. "Mr. Thornton," said the king, "I have been told of the services you have rendered to your country, and of your attachment to me and my family, and I have held myself obliged to you for both, but I was never able to estimate the degree

of the obligation until now, when I see the lady whom you left behind you."

No better account of Harrogate as it was, about this time, can be found than is given by Tobias Smollett in his best novel, "Humphrey Clinker." It was written from first-hand knowledge, for the travels of Humphrey with the Melford family were the actual travels of Smollett himself. After remarking upon the peculiar badness and roughness of the roads, and observing that Harrogate lies eight miles from the post-road, between Wetherby and Boroughbridge, and stating that the famous water is supplied from a copious spring in the hollow of a wild common, round which houses have been built for the accommodation of the drinkers, he proceeds to tell what sort of folk he found there :— "Most of the company lodge at some distance, in five separate inns, situated in different parts of the common, from whence they go every morning to the well in their own carriages. The lodgers of each inn form a distinct society, that eat together ; and there is a commodious public room, where they breakfast in deshabille, at separate tables, from eight o'clock till eleven, as they chance or choose to come in. Here also they drink tea in the afternoon, and play at cards or dance in the evening. One custom, however, prevails, which I look upon as a solecism in politeness. The ladies treat with tea in their turns ; and even girls of sixteen are not exempted from this shameful imposition. There is a public ball by subscription every night at one of the houses, to which all the company from the others

are admitted by tickets; and, indeed, Harrogate treads upon the heels of Bath in the articles of gaiety and dissipation; with this difference, however, that here we are more sociable and familiar. One of the inns is already full up to the very garrets, having no less than fifty lodgers, and as many servants. Our family does not exceed thirty-six; and I should be sorry to see the number augmented, as our accommodations won't admit of much increase. At present the company is more agreeable than one could expect from an accidental assemblage, . . . there seems to be a general disposition among us to maintain good fellowship and promote the purposes of humanity in favour of those who come hither on the score of health. I see several faces which we left at Bath, although the majority are of the Northern counties, and many come from Scotland." Smollett particularises as to none of the faces he saw at Harrogate, but about this time he might have seen there, at the "Marquis of Granby," the great Clive, and an equally famous American General, Charles Lee, and the eccentric John Hall Stevenson, and his friend Laurence Sterne—"the first people in the land were here," says one of Sterne's biographers, "and at one table alone the united rental of the guests reached to £60,000."

IX. EUGENE ARAM

CONSIDERABLE as is the literature which has grown up around Mother Shipton since Lownds published his four-page tract in 1641, it fades into insignificance when compared with the body of printed matter which during the last hundred and fifty years has gathered around Eugene Aram, the Knaresborough schoolmaster who figured in one of the most-talked of murders of modern times. Mr. E. R. Watson, in his book on Aram's life and trial, in which he sums up the evidence from a purely legal standpoint, gives a bibliography of the subject, which proves that Aram has surely been more written about than any other famous English criminal. He enumerates 14 legal records; 9 accounts in the London and 6 in the provincial press; 9 articles in the magazines of 1759; 27 reports of the trial at York; 3 "Araminia" (the pamphlets of Norrison Scatcherd, who endeavoured to whitewash Aram); 5 extracts from leading biographical dictionaries and encyclopædias; 18 accounts in criminal calendars and collected trials; 20 articles or references in Yorkshire books; 18 accounts in miscellaneous works; 9 references in legal and medical books; 20 press articles since

1759; 3 papers in phrenological works; 5 references in books about King's Lynn; 7 novels or plays; 14 particulars of portraits; and innumerable questions and answers in *Notes and Queries*. This list, amazingly full as it is, is by no means exhaustive. Not a year—one might almost say, not a month—passes without something being written about Eugene Aram in the Yorkshire journals, and, in spite of Mr. Watson's exhaustive treatment of the Clark murder, and his emphatic assertion of Aram's guilt, there has since the publication of his book a few years ago, been more than one attempt in local journals to reassert Aram's innocence, and to represent him as a deeply wronged man.

It has usually been held that Eugene Aram would never have been much heard of if it had not been for Lord Lytton's novel, and for Tom Hood's poem. But the fact is that from the very first Aram was a much discussed person, and that an unusual amount of interest was taken in his trial and fate, not only in the neighbourhood of Knaresborough, but in places far off. In August and September, 1759, the London journals were full of him; at the same time he was being written about in several of the big provincial towns, and in Scotland and in Ireland; a curious publication called the *Magazine of Magazines*, printed at Limerick, devoted five pages to him in its August issue of the year just mentioned. The accounts of his trial, in book or pamphlet form, were numerous: within thirty years of his death some of them had reached ten and eleven editions, and one at least had been reprinted in the United

States. All this, of course, was long before Lytton evoked the sighs of schoolgirls over his sentimental hero, and before Tom Hood provided actors with a fine poem for recitation. Around Aram, and around the circumstances of Daniel Clark's murder, and around Richard Houseman, indeed, around all the doings at Knaresborough in 1745, there was mystery and romance, and the interest was considerably added to by Aram's speech from the dock. It was a new thing that a murderer should prove himself a man of learning, even of genius, and until that day probably no judge had ever heard so much erudition from the lips of a prisoner at the bar. Aram, from the moment of his condemnation, became a figure of note, and as is usually the case in such circumstances people took a mighty concern in him who were not particularly affected by his innocence or his guilt; what did interest them was his undoubtedly strange personality. To this day, most folk who visit Knaresborough have the romantic figure of the Nidderdale scholar in their minds' eyes.

Aram was born at Ramsgill, in Nidderdale, in 1704, the son of one Peter Aram, a Nottinghamshire man who had settled near Knaresborough as a gardener, and, in addition to more than ordinary ability in that calling, had some literary gifts, and wrote a poem on the natural beauties of Studley. He was in the employ of the Blackett family at Newby; at Ripon, near by, Eugene was sent to school at a very early age. Between his thirteenth and sixteenth years he appears to have been

Thornton Sculp.

EUGENE ARAM

convicted at York Assizes Aug.t 3. 1759. for the Murder of Dan.l Clark of Knaresborough in the County of York. His body was hung in Chains pursuant to his sentance in knaresborough forest. He was Executed fourteen Years after the Murder. His own Defence is very artful and ingenious, but yet before he suffer'd he confessid the fact.

Published by Alex.r Hogg & Co

employed under his father, in the Newby gardens; his sixteenth and seventeenth years he seems to have spent chiefly in London, as a clerk in the counting-house of one of the Blacketts, who was engaged in mercantile pursuits. An attack of small-pox cut short his London experiences, and he returned to Nidderdale, where for some time he kept a small school in a room at Gowthwaite Hall, near his own birthplace. Some of his pupils subsequently achieved distinction, and one of them speaks of him as having been, even at that early age, "a rigid disciplinarian" and "a famous scholar." Apart, however, from his Ripon schooldays, and a month which he once spent with Adcock, the eccentric vicar of Burnsall, in Wharfedale, Aram was self-taught, and it was during his residence at Gowthwaite, while teaching others, that he acquired his very respectable knowledge of Latin and Greek.

In 1731 Aram, described in the register as "Ujenius," was married at Lofthouse, near Middlesmoor, high up in Nidderdale, to Anna Spence, and a few years later he settled with his wife and one or two young children at Knaresborough, where, in White Horse Yard, he opened a school; a mean establishment of "two thatched rooms with no fireplace," his dwelling-house, a cottage in Church Lane, was little more pretentious. He began to learn Hebrew at this time, and according to one of the pamphlets published at York after his trial, the general trend of which is by no means in his favour, he was then regarded in Knaresborough with a good

deal of respect. "His way of living and outward deportment," says the author, "were most remarkably unblameable for many years. He was most upright and fair in all dealings and transactions he had with other people, of great outward tenderness and humanity." However, he eventually formed friendships with two men of low position, one Daniel Clark, a shoemaker; the other, Richard Houseman, a flax-dresser, and through them, or because of them, he certainly came to his downfall and ruin. One can do no more here than glance at the chronological events. On the 7th February, 1745, Aram, who was known to be in desperate need of money, left his house in the company of Clark, Houseman, and a third man at 11 o'clock at night: later that night they were seen in the neighbourhood of St. Robert's cave. Clark was never seen again in the town, and plausible explanations were offered in respect to his disappearance. About three months after this, Aram left Knaresborough for London, but his exact whereabouts during the next few years is uncertain. In 1757 he was at King's Lynn, and in 1758 was formally appointed to a mastership at the Grammar School there. In August, 1758, the skeleton of a man was found at Thistle Hill, Knaresborough, and as the result of two inquests and of a chance remark by Houseman, which led to his examination and arrest, the body of Daniel Clark was unearthed in St. Robert's Cave, and Aram and Houseman pronounced guilty of his murder at a further inquest held on August 18th. Next day Aram was arrested at King's Lynn, and two days later he was brought

to York Castle. In the following June—1759—Houseman turned King's Evidence, and it was chiefly due to him that Aram, on being brought up before Mr. Justice Noel, on August 3rd, was found guilty and sentenced to death. He was hanged at York on the 6th, and his body was gibbeted at Knaresborough on the 7th, on the right-hand side of the road leading to Plumpton, near the Low Bridge. The beam from which it hung in chains was afterwards built into a room at the Brewers' Arms Inn, where, until quite recent times, it was an object of great interest to visitors to Harrogate and Knaresborough.

Aram was doubtless found guilty on Houseman's evidence, supported by some very damning facts. As to Houseman's account of the affair, given in the witness-box, it is thus epitomised by Mr. Watson:

"Houseman . . . deposed . . . that he went one night, about Candlemass, 1744 [5] to Aram's house . . . that between two and three in the morning Aram and Clark went out of the house, asking him to take a walk with them, which he complied with; that they walked up the street together; that there was another man, unknown to him, on the other side of the way; that they proceeded to a close, where St. Robert's Cave is; that Aram and Clark went into it over the hedge; that he saw them quarrelling, and saw Aram strike Clark, but he could not see if Aram had any weapon . . . that, on seeing Clark fall, he made the best of his way home; that he knew not what Aram did with

the body till next morning, when Aram called on him, and told him he had left it in the cave, but threatened vengeance on him if he ever disclosed what had passed the preceding night." In a footnote, Mr. Watson observes, "the whole was palpably untrue," but he gives it as his opinion, in concluding his book that "everything in Aram's conduct points to his guilt of deliberate murder without a shadow of excuse," and that "this was exactly how his crime appeared to contemporaries:" he also affirms that had Aram been tried in our own times "he would have had no chance at all."

What had Aram himself to say as to the circumstances of Clark's death, or disappearance? Before Mr. Thornton, the magistrate, at Thornville, to whom he was carried on his arrival from King's Lynn, he said that Daniel Clark, in February, 1744–5, was endeavouring to defeat his creditors, and meant to run away with what property he possessed; that on the night of February 7th Clark and Houseman came to his, Aram's, cottage with a quantity of plate, which belonged to Clark: another man, Perry, an inn-keeper, brought more, also belonging to Clark; that all four men went down to St. Robert's Cave, and there beat the plate flat so that Clark could the more conveniently carry it away; that by the time they had finished this task it was full morning, and too late for Clark to go; that Clark accordingly remained hidden in the Cave, to which Terry brought him victuals during the day; that next night he, Aram, went with Terry and Houseman to the cave again, but on this occasion

he himself did not enter it, he staying to keep watch while the others went in ; that he heard noises there until they came out ; that they then told him Clark had gone, and that they had bought from him the plate, watches, and rings, which they then had with them in a bag. He further deposed that Terry afterwards told him that after first burying the plate on Howe Hill, he carried it away to Scotland, and there sold it. Of Clark's actual fate, he professed utter ignorance.

At his trial before Mr. Justice Noel, Aram delivered a speech which has been much discussed ever since. Mr. Watson, who gives Bristow's version of it, devotes a chapter to the question of its real authorship. It was very largely devoted to disputing the authenticity of the remains which the prosecutor alleged to be those of Daniel Clark, and there was a great deal of learned talk about the bones, skeletons, and so on which have been turned up in different places at different periods. He pointed out that at Knaresborough, where much fighting had taken place in the course of history, human remains were in plenty, and suggested that there was nothing to prove that those found in this particular case were really those of Clark. Altogether, there was a great deal of ingenuity, skill, and scientific knowledge displayed in the speech, and it is, perhaps, not to be wondered at that certain folk disputed Aram's ability to compose it—he, actually, read it in court from a manuscript. One such suggestion is notable. In 1863, Mr. Hopkinson, a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, at a meeting

of the Bath Literary and Philosophical Association, boldly stated that "the defence was written by Mr. Mauleverer," a barrister of the Northern Circuit, and that he said this on the best authority. But Mr. Watson dismisses this—with emphasis. "Nothing," he says, "in the matter or manner of the address is inconsistent with the view that Aram composed it. It is the effort of a scholar—remote, indeed, from his books—not of a barrister."

Popular opinion in Knaresborough, at the time of the trial, was highly unfavourable to Houseman not merely because he turned King's Evidence, but from a genuine belief in his guilt. After Aram's execution, and while his body was still hanging in chains near Low Bridge, Houseman returned to the town. On his appearing in public, according to a contemporary newspaper account, "a cry, almost universal, of 'Scape-Gallows!' arose, and so furious did the multitude become, that although some one opened him a house of refuge, his life was with difficulty preserved." His effigy was carried about the streets, and after being knocked on the head with a pick-axe was hanged and burnt. Later, his house was attacked and damaged by a mob, led, or incited, by two Oxford undergraduates who had at one time been Eugene Aram's pupils. Eventually he retired to a neighbouring village, where he was always an object of dislike and suspicion, and it is said that when he died a good deal of Daniel Clark's property was found to have been in his secret possession. And while there is little doubt that Aram was guilty of murder, whether as the actual

murderer, or as an accessory, there seems just as much certainty that Houseman and Terry were equally guilty, and that the watches, rings, plate, for which Clark was done to death that February night, were shared amongst all four.

X. BLIND JACK OF KNARESBOROUGH

SOMEWHERE about the year 1735 an assembly, or long, room was added to the Green Dragon inn at Harrogate, and in it, of an evening, the guests of the house assembled for dancing. There were doubtless many notables to be seen in this humble gathering-place in those days, for already the aristocracy and gentry of the northern counties had begun to frequent Harrogate in its season. There may be records of their names and states in some hidden documents; letters, receipted bills, house-books and the like; otherwise their identity is lost to us. But we may safely conceive that out of all those gay throngs not one person was of such real character and eminence as a certain blind man who, at first alone, afterwards with one or two assistants, made music on his fiddle for the visitors to dance to. Nobody perhaps took any particular notice of him—blind fiddlers were by no means uncommon. If the young men of fashion or the country squire's daughter glanced at the fiddler at all, it was probably because his physique was not one usually associated with such a gentle art as that of music. A big, finely built, six-foot man, evidently of herculean

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JOHN METCALF AGED 79.

Drawn by J. P. Smith.

strength, active, alert; a man of a handsome, mobile countenance, and so sprightly of movement and expression that it often came as a shock and a surprise to folk when they found out that his eyes were sightless—such was Blind Jack of Knaresborough in the days when he fiddled every evening in the long room of the Green Dragon at Harrogate.

John Metcalf, one of the very greatest of all great Yorkshiremen, a shining example of the way in which man can rise superior to one of the heaviest of human afflictions, was born at Knaresborough in August, 1717, the son of poor working people who put him to school when he was four years old and kept him there until he was six, when he became totally blind as the result of an attack of small-pox. He was a highly intelligent, active child, and within six months of his recovery from his illness had begun to make his way unaided about the neighbourhood of his father's cottage; before he was ten he could go anywhere in the town, and had achieved a reputation as a daring and skilful bird's-nester, who climbed the highest trees and most difficult crags. By the time he was thirteen he could ride a horse; at fourteen he was an expert swimmer and had saved life in the River Nidd. By this time, too, he had become a fairly expert performer on the violin, his father having paid for a course of lessons for him, and he began to play at the fortnightly assembly at Knaresborough. But his inclinations were always for outdoor life and sport, and in spite of his blindness he went hunting, kept game-cocks, and generally made light of his affliction. In 1732 he began to

fiddle at the Harrogate assemblies, and he became so popular with his patrons that he was lodged free of charge at the Green Dragon, and stabling was also found for his horse. Out of the season he was much in request at the neighbouring country houses, and he began to travel about the country a good deal, going as far as Scarborough, and subsequently to London, whence he made an excursion up the Thames Valley. Eventually he ran away with the handsomest young woman in Harrogate, on the very eve of her marriage to another man, prompted to this daring act by her sudden declaration that she would rather starve with him than live in luxury with any other. The marriage turned out a highly successful one, and Metcalf built for himself and his bride a house at Knaresborough, getting the stone from the bed of the river, and doing the mason work with his own hands.

Still continuing to play at the Harrogate assemblies, and spending his spare time in his sporting adventures, going a-hunting, playing bowls, fighting his game-cocks, Metcalf at this period set up the first public conveyances in the rising watering-place; a four-wheel chaise and a one-horse chair. Even then he had not enough to do, so he began to trade in fish. He bought horses, fetched the fish himself from Scarborough and other coast towns, and sold it in Leeds and Manchester. He was engaged in this fashion until the events of the 1745 rebellion. Nothing would then suit him but to go with Captain Thornton's company to the North, and he went through the campaign under General

Wade, and was present at a great deal of the fighting in Scotland; he also fiddled at various entertainments given by his officers in Edinburgh and elsewhere. Returning home to find his wife and children in good health and circumstances, he determined to make use of his Scottish experiences by setting up as a vendor of wares in cotton and worsted; he also began to trade in galloways and horses, and for some time was constantly travelling between Scotland and Knaresborough. Some idea of his extraordinary quickness in getting about may be gained from the fact that he once made the journey between Knaresborough and Newcastle, seventy-four miles, between three in the morning and six in the afternoon. As if all this was not enough for his activities, he also engaged in smuggling—the profits of contraband trade, he naïvely remarks in his reminiscences, were at that period much more considerable than the risks which smugglers ran. And in 1751 he set up a stage-waggon, to ply between York and Knaresborough, and conducted it himself; it ran twice a week in summer and once in winter, and as it was the first conveyance of this sort in those parts, its proprietor found its working very profitable.

But Metcalf's true work lay yet in front of him, nor did he begin it until he was halfway through his long and remarkable life. About 1764 an Act of Parliament was obtained for the making of a road between Harrogate and Boroughbridge, and through the influence of Ostler, its surveyor, Metcalf was entrusted with the construction of the three miles between Minskip and Ferensby. How a blind

man came to be selected for engineering work of so important a nature is a mystery, but Metcalfe's extraordinary capabilities were well known to many : he was one of those men who can do anything. His ability was at once manifested in this undertaking ; as the gravel for the surface was to be taken from one particular pit, he immediately fixed up quarters for his men close by it, erected stables for his horses, and made all arrangements for the provisioning of horses and men ; while the work was in progress he constantly walked out from Knaresborough, carrying five stones of meat on his shoulder, and would be with his gang by six o'clock in the morning. The result was that his piece of highway was completed to general satisfaction, well in advance of the stipulated time. While it had been going on Metcalf taught himself a great deal about road-construction and measurement by ingenious methods of his own. He soon afterwards secured a contract for building a bridge at Boroughbridge, and when that was successfully accomplished he undertook to make a road between Knaresborough and Harrogate, over the bog, which he covered with whin and ling—a method afterwards adopted by him in some of his work on the Derbyshire borders. For this he received four hundred pounds.

He was now fairly embarked on his road-making adventures (for adventures they were, with no little true romances attending them), and for the next sixteen years he was busy in many districts : Metcalf, more than any engineer of his time, can justly be credited with having made the northern highways

what they are. Smiles, in his "Lives of the Engineers," summarises what the blind man accomplished. "In Yorkshire he made the roads between Harrogate and Harewood Bridge; between Chapeltown and Leeds; between Broughton and Addingham; between Mill Bridge and Halifax; between Wakefield and Dewsbury; between Wakefield and Doncaster; between Wakefield, Huddersfield, and Saddleworth; between Standish and Thurston Clough; between Huddersfield and High Moor; between Huddersfield and Halifax; and between Knaresborough and Wetherby." Metcalf also made the roads connecting Yorkshire and Lancashire, and many in Lancashire itself—those between Ashton and Stockport, Bury and Blackburn, Skipton and Burnley, and Stockport and Mottram are his work. In Cheshire and Derbyshire he made the highways which connect Macclesfield and Chapel-en-le-Frith; Whaley and Buxton, and Wilmslow and Congleton. And he not only made the roads, but furnished them with culverts, retaining-walls, and bridges, and it was his boast in after years that none of his bridges ever fell, however they might be tested by traffic or flood. In all, he received sixty-five thousand pounds in payment for his labours.

How came a blind man—totally blind, be it remembered, from very early childhood—to be able to undertake work which required so much knowledge, so much personal supervision? Metcalf must surely have been possessed of some extra sense. One who knew him at the time of his road-making undertakings has left a remarkable picture of him:—

"With the assistance only of a long staff, I have several times met this man traversing the roads, ascending steep and rugged heights, exploring valleys and investigating their several extents, forms, and situations, so as to answer his designs in the best manner. The plans which he makes, and the estimates he prepares, are done in a method peculiar to himself, and of which he cannot well convey the meaning to others. His abilities in this respect are, nevertheless, so great that he finds constant employment. . . . I have met this blind projector while engaged in making his survey. He was alone, as usual, and amongst other conversation, I made some inquiries respecting this new road. It was really astonishing to hear with what accuracy he described its course and the nature of the different soils through which it was conducted. Having mentioned to him a boggy piece of ground it passed through, he observed that 'that was the only place he had doubts concerning, and that he was apprehensive they had, contrary to his directions, been too sparing of their materials.'"

An example of Metcalf's ingenuity is seen in his treatment of a piece of marshy ground on the high-road between Huddersfield and Manchester. The surveyor who had laid out the line to be followed had in one place carried it over a veritable bog, which Metcalf found himself expected to dig out until he came to a solid bottom. Instead of doing this he set several hundreds of men to work on a plan of his own—a plan afterwards adopted by George Stephenson when confronted by a similar

difficulty in carrying his railway over Chat Moor, between Manchester and Liverpool. "His plan," says Smiles, "was this. He ordered heather and ling to be pulled from the adjacent ground, and after binding it together in little round bundles, which could be grasped with the hand, these bundles were placed close together in rows in the direction of the line of road, after which other similar bundles were placed transversely over them; and when all had been pressed well down, stone and gravel were led on in broad-wheeled wagons, and spread over the bundles, so as to make a fish and level way. When the first load was brought and laid on, and the horses reached the firm ground again in safety, loud cheers were set up by the persons who had assembled in the expectation of seeing both horses and wagons disappear in the bog. The whole length was finished in like manner, and it proved one of the best, and even the direst, parts of the road, standing in very little need of repair for nearly twelve years after its construction."

The blind man's curious passion for engaging in all sorts of trades and ventures lasted to the end of his life. One of his daughters married a Stockport cotton-spinner, and Metcalf, finding that trade was very brisk there, determined to try his fortune in it, though he was at that time fully engaged in road-making. He set up spinning-jennies, a carding engine, and looms for manufacturing calicoes, jeans, and velveteens. But he was not satisfied with results, and eventually made over his business to his son-in-law and went on with his road-construction.

The last road he made ran between Accrington and Haslingden; when this was finished he retired to a small farm which he had at Spofforth, near Wetherby, and there he combined farming with buying and selling hay and wood. During the last years of his life he remained remarkably active. He made long journeys to country-houses, where he was received with great affection and honour; he visited York, and recognised the alterations and improvements which were being made in its streets; in mind and body he was alert and vigorous to the last. He dictated his reminiscences to an amanuensis, and had the satisfaction of knowing that his book was highly popular. Finally, he died, at the age of ninety-three, leaving behind him four children, twenty grand-children, and ninety great-grandchildren. He was buried in the churchyard of Spofforth, and Lord Dundas erected a stone there in memory of him. But, so far, Yorkshiremen have not raised a monument to John Metcalf, who, of all worthies of the county, merits perpetual fame as an example of courage, perseverance, and cheerful acceptance of calamity.

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XI. HARROGATE IN 1830

WHEN the nineteenth century began Harrogate was already well established in public favour. It was not only famous as a health resort, but as a place whereat fashionable folk could amuse themselves in consonance with the spirit of the blessed word "Genteel." In those days it was well-nigh impossible for such a resort to become vulgarised. There were as yet no railways, and it was not so much by stage-coach as by private conveyance or post-chaise that folk came to the wells. Consequently it was only the well-to-do who came. Moreover it was by no means an inexpensive business to visit Harrogate. There were by that time several hotels, and the modern lodging-and-boarding house was beginning to show itself, but the accommodation was still limited, and visitors had to pay high prices. Altogether, whoever visited Harrogate in the days when George the Third was still king, and indeed up to the time of Queen Victoria's accession, might count on finding himself amongst very select society. Popularism—if one may coin a word—had not yet set in, and week-end visits and day excursions were not even dreamed of.

About 1812 Hargrove of Knaresborough, a

bookseller, who was also a good deal of an antiquary and a writer, and who, on the testimony of its editor sometimes "enriched" the *Gentleman's Magazine* of those days, published for its anonymous author a curious rhymed account of "A Week at Harrogate," written in a "series of letters addressed from Benjamin Blunderhead, Esq., to his friend Simon." A second edition appeared in 1813, the first having been "in very great demand." In this there are "three neat plates." The first is a view of the Chalybeate Well, at High Harrogate, an octagon building with a country mansion set amidst trees on one side, and a wind-mill, also embowered, on the other. The second is a picture of the Sulphur Well at Low Harrogate, a domed erection supported by pilasters: it, too, is surrounded by trees, and gives one the impression of rural solitude, though there figures in one corner of it a sort of walled-in promenade, wherein fashionable folk are walking, or sitting on benches. The third is a highly fanciful view of St. Robert's Chapel, with an elaborate, apparently painted-glass window, and a figure of St. Robert himself in something closely resembling the habit of a Cistercian monk. There are also in the book some of the quaint head-and-tail pieces with which Hargrove decorated most of his productions—some of them, there is reason for supposing, came from Bewick's hand.

In this rhymed chronicle Blunderhead tells what he did with himself during a week's stay at "this celebrated watering-place." Tired of Bath, he sets out for its northern rival. He reaches York

and looks round the city, which, he thinks, resembles old Rome; thence, he proceeds by way of Marston Moor and Knaresborough to Harrogate. He drives in turn to the Crown, the Crescent, and the White Hart—all are full, or say they are; they will not, at any rate, take him in; the real reason of this, he finds out later, is because he has no servant man attending him. So he seeks lodgings :—

"I inquir'd of a woman who stood at the door
If they'd room—and she answer'd with *Oh! to be sure!*
Though a deal o' fine folks du to this house repair,
I think we, at prissant, have yan room to spare!'"

Settled down, he proceeds to look around him. He finds there are two villages, "not very small"; one is High, the other Low Harrogate. There are several inns, a library, and numerous shops—"all arranged, in a row, on the side of the green"—and before he retires on his first night he learns that Harrogate is now visited every year by thousands "from town and from country, from city and court." Next morning he begins his week by consulting the physicians, whom he describes. That day he spends in walking about High Harrogate and calling at Hargrove's Library—a fashionable resort. On Tuesday he attends at the Sulphur Well, meets the company, experiences the salubrious effects of the water, and makes an excursion to Plumpton. On Wednesday he drinks the waters at both wells, hangs round the library again, and visits some of the principal inns. On Thursday he repairs to the ruins of Fountains Abbey, goes thence to Studley Royal, and takes a glance at Ripon and Hackfall:

the round, now so familiar, was even then, one sees, in fashion. On Friday, after inspecting "the warm bath," he pays a visit to Brimham Rocks, and to Aldborough, and to Newby, and on his return inspects the shops at High Harrogate. On Saturday he visits Knaresborough—"there a whole day most agreeably spent"—and sees the Dropping Well and the other lions of the town; he is so impressed by what he hears of Eugene Aram that on his return to Harrogate he must needs call in at Hargrove's shop and buy the tenth edition of "The Trial"—he finds Aram's defence "so ingenious, so learned, and clear, That its equal, I'm certain, did never appear." That evening he spends at the theatre, which, he says, is "very neat": next morning he goes, like a decorous Englishman, to the Chapel-of-Ease, another "neat little building, on the midst of the moor." With his account of the service there he brings his narrative to an end.

The anonymous author of this rhyme throws a good many sidelights on the condition of Harrogate at the time of his visit, which we may set down as having been paid about 1810–12. He tells of the fine views obtainable from High Harrogate; of a race-ground there, and of a theatre; he mentions "three excellent inns on the side of the green"; the Queen, the Granby and the Dragon; he also speaks of numerous good shops. There is half a mile distance, he tells us, between the High and the Low Town; at the Low, in addition to the house kept "by the famed Mrs. Binns," there are five inns, the Crown, the Bell, the Crescent, the Swan and

the White Hart. He specifies the doctors of the day; the "renowned Dr. Jaques"; the "fam'd Dr. Murray"; Dr. Cayley; and Dr. Campbell, "a man of great merit." He gives us a picture of Hargrove's Library, evidently a place of fashion:

> "So many young ladies, gay sparks, and new books,
> I wish you had seen how exalted my looks!"

He gives particulars of the tradesmen of the time—there was Gledhill, who sold cloaks and beautiful bonnets; and Robey, who had "bright jewels, gold watches, neat seals"; and Gilbertson, who "could make in ten minutes a new suit of clothes"; and Smith, the milliner, from New Bond Street; and Batchelor, who was a rival of Robey; he tells also of two dentists, both first-rate hands at their work, and of a surgeon, whose labours he distinguishes from those of the consulting doctors. Altogether, he gives one the impression that although Harrogate was still well outside the world, the folk who made their way to it a hundred years ago found there almost everything that fashionable and moneyed people could desire. As to the character of his fellow visitors he now and then gives us a few graphic vignettes:—

> "Lady Playfair was there, and the Countess of Care,
> Both lately arrived from the banks of the Air;
> With Madam Plotine, and old Counsellor Trounce,
> Tom Quill, and the pompous Sir Hildebrand Bounce,
> Whose flight, with Miss Ready, the fates had decreed
> Should be stopped by her guardian on this side the Tweed.

Lord Booby, a man whom his country reveres,
Who does so much honour to England's new peers,
With General Sulphur, whose worth and good name
Resound through the world, from the trumpet of fame!
And a rich Indian Nabob, o'erburdened with wealth,
Who has come from the East, to recover his health."

Hargrove, so often mentioned by the author of Blunderhead's adventures, was a prominent person in his day, at both Harrogate and Knaresborough, as writer, printer, publisher, and proprietor of a library, which, as we have seen, was a fashionable resort. His "History of Knaresborough" went through many editions; in the seventh, published in 1832, he gives a very good account of Harrogate as it was at the end of the reign of George the Fourth. Naturally, he first gives his attention to the far-famed waters. More discoveries had been made since the century began. In 1819 two new springs had come to light in the garden of Mr. John Wood; one resembled the waters of Cheltenham; the other was a chalybeate spring. Mr. Wood provides a woman to attend to them; each person drinking the water pays half a crown a week for the privilege, and is expected to give the woman something; as a sort of bonus, subscribers have the pleasure of walking in Mr. Wood's tasteful garden. In 1822, Mr. Thackwray, of the Crown Hotel, makes a similar discovery in his grounds, and over his spring erects a neat building in the manner of a Chinese Temple; he, too, provides "a female" to attend to the water-drinkers. At first Mr. Thackwray intended his spring to be reserved for his own guests; now, however, he has very generously thrown it open to

the public. So now there are quite a number of springs, and various sorts of water at Harrogate; in 1830 Dr. Hunter, of Leeds, publishes a minute and accurate analysis of their properties, and Hargrove gives equally minute instructions to visitors as to the use of these aids to health, telling them how many half-pints to drink *per diem*, and when, and where: the doses at a time vary from half a pint to two pints. He also gives some instructions and warnings about bathing in the Harrogate waters, and adds, quaintly enough, the information that "Baths are to be met with in almost every house."

By this time, however, the original Hargrove —Ely Hargrove—has disappeared; no doubt he is dead: his name only survives on title-pages. Where he flourished there is now Langdale's Library, which Ely had in his time conducted for fifty years; it contains "a valuable and numerous collection of books," and annexed to it is a spacious reading-room, provided with the newspapers and the magazines, which is, as of yore, the resort of fashion. There are other amusements. The Race-Ground, laid out under the supervision of Colonel Wolseley in 1793, has recently been much improved. There are three public dress balls a week; on Mondays at the Dragon, on Wednesday at the Crown; on Friday at the Granby; dancing begins at nine o'clock, and each person present pays three shillings. The usual excursions are still in favour, and those who care for it may indulge in the genteel sport of archery. When the weather is unfavourable for outdoor pursuits, there is the

Promenade Room to turn to: its erection was suggested by Dr. Cayley in 1805 and it is seventy-five feet in length and thirty in breadth; its doors are open from seven o'clock in the morning until sunset, from May to November. But since Benjamin Blunderhead's visit, twenty years ago, the theatre, for some unstated reason, has ceased to exist, and has been converted into dwelling-houses.

At this time Harrogate is showing the first signs of modern progress. The old chapel-of-ease, built in 1749, has been pulled down, and a new church erected in its place. Just sixty years after the opening of the chapel, Colonel Marshall (of the Honourable East India Company's service) is moved to begin collecting subscriptions for a church, and he does so well that in 1830, Mr. Oates, architect, of Huddersfield, begins building operations; he gets his task completed by the October of the following year, when the new fabric is solemnly consecrated by the Rt. Rev. J. B. Sumner, Lord Bishop of Chester, in whose diocese Harrogate is situated. It holds 1250 people; 800 of the sittings are declared free and unappropriated for ever; the total cost, "including the catacombs," is not far short of £4500: the parish which it is to serve has been detached from that of Knaresborough. So there are now, in 1832, two churches at Harrogate, for Low Harrogate got one, St. Mary's, in 1824; it, too, was built by subscription. And there are two chapels; the Methodists have one, "on a foot-path between High and Low Harrogate," and the Independents another, near Prospect

Place. Also there are schools—the National School at High Harrogate accommodates one hundred children; two hundred children attend the Sunday School. And near Grove House, on the road leading to Bilton, is a curious establishment called the Bachelors' Garden School, founded and endowed by two single gentlemen, Francis and Richard Taylor, in 1793, who left sixteen acres of land, a house and garden, for the purpose of educating an unlimited number of boys and girls in reading, writing, arithmetic, and the principles of the Established Church. Moreover, there is a clothing society, and a visiting society, "on the plan recommended by the Bishop of Chester," and altogether Harrogate, when William the Fourth came to the throne, seems to have been flourishing and prosperous. But it was still a simple, rural, and unpretentious place, and that it did not appeal to everybody we may gather from the fact that Sydney Smith, visiting it at about this time, had the bad manners to describe it as the most Heaven-forsaken place under the sun.

XII. NEW TOWN AND OLD BOROUGH

FOUR years after the accession of Queen Victoria Harrogate came under the care of a governing body styled the Improvement Commissioners, which remained in power from 1841 to 1884, and during its forty-three years of rule worked vast changes in the town. Its first care was to improve the wells which had become Harrogate's greatest asset. Over the old sulphur well—the spring discovered in the very early days—it built the Royal Pump Room; it covered in the original Tewit Well, the chalybeate spring discovered by Dr. Stanhope in 1631; and the magnesia wells; it founded the Victoria Baths; erected a market hall; purchased and laid out irrigation farms; and instituted a complete system of drainage: altogether, the work of these Improvement Commissioners laid the foundation of the Harrogate of to-day. Progress was continuous; in 1846 a gas company procured an Act of Parliament which enabled it to light the growing town; two years later similar powers were obtained by another company in respect to a water supply. The water was first got from the neighbourhood of Haverah Park, and stored in reservoirs on the west of the town:

of recent years further supplies have been brought from the moorland country near Kirkby Malzeard.

In 1884 the old body of Improvement Commissioners came to its end, having done many great things, and Harrogate became a municipal borough, with a Mayor and Corporation of its own. Now the Corporation owns all the springs in the town and has so managed matters that Harrogate may justly claim to be the leading watering-place in England, worthy to rank with the most famous spas of the Continent. Few places, either in this country or abroad, are so richly endowed with mineral waters. The medical experts divide them into classes. The strong sulphur water, only obtainable at the old Royal Sulphur Well, is said to be the strongest of its kind. There are seventeen springs of mild sulphur water; two of saline chalybeates, five of pure chalybeates, and one of magnesia; in the Bog Wells there are no fewer than thirty springs of one sort or another, and according to the advertisements put out by the authorities there are now over eighty in the district. The waters are drunk by vast numbers of people in the season: there is an average attendance of from a thousand to twelve hundred drinkers at the old well before breakfast every morning. And for a long time there has been no need for visitors to take their baths in the lodging-houses, as was the custom in Benjamin Blunderhead's time. There are four principal bathing establishments, three of which belong to the Corporation. The Royal Baths, opened in 1897 by the late Duke of Cambridge,

replaced the old Montpellier Baths, and cost £100,000. Opposite to these are the Victoria Baths, built in 1871 at a cost of £30,000. Heavy expenditure, it will be seen, is a matter of little importance in anything relating to Harrogate. There are other bathing establishments at Starbeck and at Harlow Car. Nor are the baths of Harrogate strictly confined to the use of the rich folk who go there. In 1824 a bathing establishment was founded for the benefit of poor people, free of all charge; sixty-five years later it was rebuilt at a cost of £30,000. There are numerous other hospitals, convalescent homes, orphanages, and infirmaries in the town, and no one need spend a penny in drinking the Harrogate waters for his health's sake, for outside the original sulphur well there is a free tap to which any person may resort at his pleasure.

Harrogate, according to the latest returns, had in 1911 a population of 33,706 and a rateable value of £274,812; its birth-rate was 14·7; its death-rate 12·4. But its population during the season is probably nearer 100,000 than 30,000, and the authorities have to provide for its needs rather than for those of the lesser one of the winter months. During the last hundred years the place has been changed out of all knowledge. There are in Harrogate over thirty miles of streets and roads; opportunities for indoor and outdoor amusement and recreation are profuse. There is a kursaal (why furnished with a most unfitting name no one knows) which has accommodation for sixteen hundred visitors; an opera house, and a theatre. Music

STATION SQUARE—HARROGATE

of the finest quality is to be heard every day in the season. Mr. Carnegie some years ago presented the town with a handsome building under his library-providing scheme. There is a School of Art, and a Technical School, and the two schools of a hundred years ago have increased in such fashion that if the private establishments are taken into account it would be difficult to number them. Harrogate, indeed, is one of the towns most favoured by the private schoolmaster and schoolmistress because of its fine situation and bracing air; few places in England are so richly endowed with wide, open spaces, nor set in such a healthy environment. And while the schools have multiplied, so, too, have the churches and chapels. The two churches of 1832, which served High and Low Harrogate have been supplemented by seven more, and all the principal dissenting communions are represented by buildings worthy of the general architectural status of the town.

One of the great advantages of Harrogate as a health resort is its nearness to some of the most famous and interesting places and scenery in Yorkshire. One might easily spend a month in the town and go out from it to some new scene every day. The fine and extensive views from Harlow Hill, the breeziness of Harlow Moor, the mountain scenery of Birk Crag, the old-worldness of Plumpton, the many things to be seen in Knaresborough—all these are close at hand to the great modern hotels, palatial boarding-establishments, and private lodging-houses. Within a few miles are Brimham Rocks; one of the

most remarkable natural curiosities in the country; Alms Cliff, overlooking Wharfedale; Aldborough, the *Isurium* of the Romans, full of deeply interesting Roman remains; Boroughbridge, still reminiscent of the old coaching days; Wetherby, another typical old English town; the great Oak of Cowthorpe, reputed to be at least 1500 years old, and Spofforth and the ruins of its castle, once the seat of the Percies, Earls of Northumberland. Somewhat farther away, but easily accessible by rail or road, are Bolton Priory and Barden Tower; Kirkstall Abbey and the old castle and fine modern house at Harewood; Fountains Abbey and Markenfield Hall. And Harrogate has the further advantage of being close to both York and Ripon—two cities which no Englishman should ever weary of exploring.

While Harrogate has been transformed into a modern town which must always be unique in its arrangements because of its possession for ever of the great open space called the Stray, Knaresborough has remained stationary—there has been little appreciable change in its old streets for many a long year. While many of the old Yorkshire towns have become modernised by the spread of coal-mining or of manufacturing, Knaresborough, having neither coal-mines nor mills in its vicinity, has retained much of its old-world air. Yet it was once a manufacturing town itself, turning out first woollen cloths and then linen, and in 1788, the quantity of linen manufactured weekly was a thousand pieces of 20 yards in length by 35 inches in breadth, each piece being worth from 13s. to 30s. At this time

it also made cotton : in 1808 four hundred pieces a week were being produced. In 1818 flax was being manufactured to the quantity of 1700 tons ; 740 tons more were manufactured between Knaresborough and Pateley Bridge. But from that year the linen trade began to decline. It took too long to get Knaresborough goods to the London markets ; other places, more favourably situated, got the trade. In 1826 came a commercial crisis, in the course of which many of the smaller manufacturers were ruined ; workmen emigrated, and the old industry succumbed, though as recently as 1851 there were specimens of Knaresborough linen on view at the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park.

There is little to chronicle in the modern history of such a quiet, old-world town as Knaresborough ; its story lies in the far past. But during the last hundred years some touches of the new spirit came to it, though they did not always materialise. In 1800, where the townsfolk were feeling themselves under great disadvantages of transit and communication, a project was put forward for making a canal from the river Ure at Ellenthorpe to a point near Knaresborough. The cost was estimated at £230,000, and the plan came to naught. Eighteen years later there was another scheme of making a railway and a canal which between them would link up Knaresborough with the Ouse ; this, which would have cost £93,000, also failed ; so, too, did a plan of making a line of railway up the Nidd valley. But in 1847 railway enterprise began at Knaresborough with the construction of a line connecting

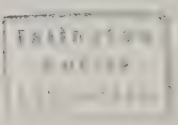
the town with York: it began, too, with disaster. Over the river Nidd was built a high viaduct of four arches, three hundred feet in length and ninety feet in height. The first stone of this was laid in April, 1847, and it was nearly completed when, on March 11–12, 1848, the whole structure collapsed into the river far beneath. The loss amounted to £10,000, but the viaduct was quickly rebuilt and the line finished, and, with the old Leeds and Thirsk railway, begun in 1845, brought Knaresborough into closer touch with the outside world.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the old town lost one of its most ancient privileges—that of direct representation in the House of Commons. Although Knaresborough had been created a free borough by Edward II., early in the fourteenth century, it was not called upon to send representatives to Parliament until 1553. Its first two members were Reginald Beisley, Recorder of Scarborough and Admiral of the North Parts, and Ralph Scrope; during the next hundred years the names of Slingsby, Hutton, Bethell, Benson, are found in the roll of members. At first the franchise was confined to a specified number of houses called burgages; of these there were in 1611 about eighty-five. Early in the eighteenth century the practice began of buying up the burgages, in order to ensure the election of some particular candidate, and from 1720 to 1832, when the Reform Bill was passed, the town was virtually a pocket borough of the Dukes of Devonshire. Whenever an election was held the burgage holders, who were the Duke's tenants from

his estates in Wharfedale or in the East Riding, were brought into the town to vote, given a good dinner at one of the inns, and sent home again. This naturally caused much dissatisfaction amongst the residents, and faction fights were frequent, and one, in 1805, resulted in proceedings at York Assizes. After 1832 the franchise was enlarged, and the number of voters increased to 278. It was obviously ridiculous that so small a constituency should return two members, and after a reduction to one, the representation was withdrawn altogether, and the town included in one of the county divisions.

The proudest thing which Knaresborough can boast of during the nineteenth century, perhaps during all its life as a town, is that it was the birthplace of one of England's greatest historians, the late Bishop Stubbs. His father, William Morley Stubbs, was a solicitor of the town, whose family had been connected with the Forest for many centuries. The late Bishop of Oxford was born in the High Street of Knaresborough in June, 1825, and if Knaresborough has reason to be proud of him, he, too, felt it a proud thing to have been born in Knaresborough. "I was born," he said in a speech delivered at Reading in 1889, "under the shadow of the great castle in which Beket's murderers found refuge during the year that followed his martyrdom, the year during which the dogs under the table declined to eat their crusts. There, too, as customary tenants of the Forest, my forefathers had done suit and service to Richard, King of the Romans, and after him to Queen Philippa and

John of Gaunt, long before poor King Richard was kept a prisoner in the king's chamber. My grandfather's house stood on the ground on which Earl Thomas of Lancaster was taken prisoner by Edward II., on the very site of the battle of Boroughbridge; he, too, was churchwarden of the chapel in which the Earl was captured. The first drive that my father ever took me led us across Marston-Moor; our great-grandfather lived in an old manor-house of the monks of Fountains; another had a farm in the village where Harold Hardrada fell before the son of Godwin. Then, within a radius of ten miles, we returned ten members to Parliament from five boroughs, two lying in the same parish, and one or other and all together using every different franchise known to the law before the Reform Act." In one of the very last letters written by Bishop Stubbs—April, 1901—he says, "So long as I last I continue a devout Yorkshireman." His interest in all matters of Yorkshire history and archæology was deep and great, and he left a truly valuable legacy to his fellow Yorkshiremen of like tastes in the Genealogical History of his own family, prepared by himself, and printed for the Yorkshire Archæological Society, at the expense of his eldest son, after his death. In that volume those who would know more of the Forest of Knaresborough will find much curious and interesting detail as to the lives of many generations of dwellers in its solitudes.



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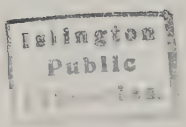

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